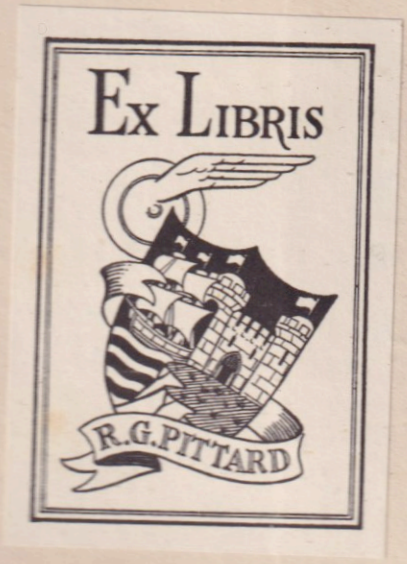
BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

TERENCE BRYANT
1980
BRISTOL COLLECTION

Chamber of Commerce
Annual Reports
1823 – 33
plus 9 Reports
to Special Meeting
etc. (1824-28)
20 items



RULES AND REGULATIONS

FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT

OF A

Chamber of Commerce

IN BRISTOL,

SETTLED AND ADOPTED AT A GENERAL MEETING,

Held at the Commercial Sale Room, the 25th of Feb. 1823;

ALSO,

THE REPORT

OF THE

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

APPOINTED

For drawing up such Rules and Regulations.

J. M. GUTCH, PRINTER, BRISTOL.

AT a GENERAL MEETING of Merchants, Bankers, Manufacturers, Tradesmen, and other Persons interested in the prosperity of the Port of Bristol, held by adjournment at the *Commercial Sale Room* the 25th Feb. 1823,

JOS. REYNOLDS, Esq.
In the Chair;

Resolved—That the Rules and Regulations which have now been discussed and passed, be adopted as the Rules and Regulations on which the *Bristol Chamber of Commerce* shall be established, and that they be printed and circulated under the direction of the Committee.

Resolved—That Books, for receiving the Signatures of Persons desirous of becoming Members of the Chamber, do lie open at the Commercial Rooms, and at the Office of the Provisional Secretary, in the Exchange Buildings, for a fortnight after the distribution of the Rules, and that a Meeting of the Persons so subscribing be then convened.

JOS. REYNOLDS,
CHAIRMAN.

RULES & REGULATIONS

OF THE

Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

I.—THIS Association shall be designated, THE BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, TRADE AND MANUFACTURES.

The object of the Chamber is, to protect and promote the Commercial, Trading and Manufacturing Interests of Bristol, and of its individual Members; and its views and operations shall embrace the removal of obstacles, which tend to prevent the increase of Trade.

All Merchants, Bankers, Ship-Owners, Manufacturers, Tradesmen, and other Persons possessing property in Bristol, or in any of the neighbouring Ports, Towns and Places with which Bristol is immediately connected, as a Depot or Market for their supplies, produce or manufactures, shall be invited to join the Association.

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BYE RULES

OF THE

Bristol Chamber of Commerce,

AGREED ON AND PASSED

AT A

BOARD MEETING,

The 16th June, 1823.

PRINTED BY J. M. CUTCH, SMALL STREET, BRISTOL.

Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

BYE RULES.

THE BOARD.

1.—All Meetings of the Board shall be held on Mondays at twelve o'clock, unless in cases of manifest inconvenience.

2.—Notice of all Meetings of the Board (excepting adjournments for not more than 48 hours) shall be sent to the Members, directed to them at their residence, or usual place of business. And the Summons for Meetings occurring on Mondays, shall, if possible, be issued by the Secretary on the Friday preceding.

3.—In every Summons the Secretary shall specify the business to be transacted; but the Board shall not hereby be precluded from considering and deciding upon any business not mentioned in the notice, (unless at Meetings specially convened for a particular object,) provided that such business be not the rescinding of any former Resolution of the Board.

4.—Members shall be fined 1*s.* for non-attendance at the Board at the time specified in the Summons, (the same having been delivered at least twelve hours previously) unless excused by illness, or absence from town or their usual place of residence; the point of time being decided by the Exchange regulator.

5.—All Summonses sent through the Post-Office, shall be considered as delivered from the hour of the next town delivery.

6.—At every Meeting of the Board, previously to entering upon any business, the Secretary shall call over the names of the Directors in rotation, marking the absentees; and shall declare the fines incurred at the previous Board; which fines if not then remitted by the sense of the Meeting, shall be considered as confirmed; except in cases of continued absence from home, or indisposition. All fines shall be paid to the Secretary, by whom an account shall be kept, and the amount shall be subject to the disposal of the Board of Directors.

7.—The minutes of the last Board-Meeting shall be read by the Secretary, or (in his absence) by the Chairman, and afterwards the

reports from the Standing and other existing Committees, and the business arising therefrom shall be first disposed of.

8.—No Member of the Board shall be required to act on more than two existing Committees, unless he acquiesced in the appointment; and an appointment to an arbitration, shall be considered an exemption from serving on more than one Committee.

9.—No resolution of one Meeting of the Board, shall be altered or revoked at a subsequent one, unless a special notice of the intended alteration be given in the Summons; nor unless the number concurring in the proposed change shall be larger than that which passed the resolution to be revoked.

10.—Every Member of the Board proposing a subject or desirous of expressing his sentiments on any measure under consideration, shall rise and address the Chairman; and shall on no account interrupt another Speaker except on a point of order.

No Member shall leave any Meeting of the Board previously to the Chairman having quitted the chair without his permission.

THE COMMITTEES.

11.—On the appointment of a Committee, the hour and place of its first Meeting shall be fixed by the Member proposing it, and, if practicable, at the Board when the same is appointed; and one clear day's notice thereof, specifying the business, shall be sent to each Member. But where all the Members composing a Committee being present, shall concur in fixing the Meeting for business, such agreement shall supersede the necessity for notice.

12.—If a Committee adjourn the business under their consideration beyond 18 hours, then notice of the adjourned Meeting shall be sent to each Member.

13.—Members of Committees shall be fined One Shilling for non-attendance at the Meeting at the time specified in the Summons, (the same having been delivered at least 12 hours previously) unless excused by illness or absence from town or their usual place of residence; the point of time being decided by the Exchange regulator.

14.—At the first Meeting of a Committee (the President or either of the Vice-Presidents

not being appointed on it) the Members shall elect a Chairman, by whom in the absence of the Secretary, the minutes of the business transacted at each Meeting shall be taken.

15.—At every such Meeting (the fines being adjusted) the minutes of the previous Meeting shall be read, and any business arising therefrom shall be first proceeded in.

16.—No Member shall leave any Meeting previously to the Chairman having quitted the chair, without his permission.

17.—At each Monthly Meeting of the Board, every existing Committee shall present a written report of their progress signed by their Chairman.

18.—Notices of the existing Committees, and the time of their next Meeting (when ascertained) shall be posted constantly in the Rooms of the Chamber.

THOMAS STOCK, Vice-President,

CHAIRMAN.

II.—Individuals shall be received as Life Members of the Chamber, on payment of Twenty Guineas, and signing the Regulations. All other persons admitted Members shall sign the Regulations, and pay on entrance the sum of Two Guineas and an annual sum of One Guinea, to be due and payable on the 1st of January for the current year. But the Chamber shall have power from time to time to increase the entrance-money and subscriptions.

Any Member, intending to leave the Association, shall give written notice to the Secretary, at least one month before the 31st December, or shall be held liable for his Subscription for the ensuing year. Where such Subscription shall by notice be withdrawn, or shall be discontinued for more than one year without notice, the party shall forfeit the entrance-money and cease to be a Member; and no Member shall be entitled to any privilege of the Chamber whose annual subscription is unpaid.

Firms becoming Members of the Chamber shall be represented by one partner only, whose name shall be given in at the time of paying the subscription, and may be changed once at the commencement of each year, and not oftener; unless in case of the death or incapacity of the partner so nominated. The other partners may be present at meetings

of the Chamber, but shall not be allowed to take part in the discussion, or to vote on any question, except on their becoming Members individually.

III.—A Meeting of the Chamber shall be held on the last Monday in January in every year, at a place and hour to be fixed by the Board of Directors; of which ten days' notice shall be given in each of the Bristol Papers. The regular business of the Annual Meeting shall be—first, to receive and pass the audited Accounts of the Chamber, to supply the vacancies in the Board of Directors, and to elect from the Board a President and two Vice-Presidents; to appoint a Banking Firm in Bristol to be Treasurers, and also to elect three Auditors of Accounts (not being Directors), for the current year. The Board of Directors shall also make a full report to this meeting of their proceedings during the past year; with such further communications as they shall deem requisite. And it shall then be competent to the meeting to recommend to the consideration of the Directors any subject of a general nature within the design of the Chamber, in which the interference of the Board may be thought expedient. No previous notice shall be required of any business to be transacted at the annual meeting; but every motion proposed at meetings of the Chamber shall be in

writing, nor shall a verbal motion be put from the Chair.

IV.—The President, the Vice-Presidents, or any ten Directors may convene a special meeting of the Chamber; and the President or one Vice-President, or in their absence, the Secretary shall forthwith call such a meeting, on receiving a written requisition from one-fourth part, or forty in number of the members of the Chamber.

Seven days notice, by Post, of every such meeting, and of the business to be then brought forward, shall be sent to each member; nor shall any business, of which due notice has not been so given, be transacted or discussed thereat.

At all meetings of the Chamber and Board of Directors, the Chair shall be taken by the President, or in his absence by one of the Vice-Presidents, or in their absence by some other Director; who shall have a casting vote only.

No addition to, or alteration in, the fundamental Regulations of the Chamber shall be adopted, until the same shall have been discussed and decided on at one special meeting, and confirmed at the next.

The election of Officers, and all matters relating to personal character, shall be decided on by ballot; but all other questions before the Chamber by open vote.

If the business regularly brought forward at any meeting of the Chamber cannot conveniently be concluded thereat, the same may be adjourned; and such unfinished business only be proceeded with at the adjourned meeting, without a new notice.

V.—All business and negociations of the Chamber shall be managed and transacted by a Board of ~~forty-two~~ 24 Directors, elected by ballot from the Chamber at large (with the exception of members who may be of the legal profession.) Of these Directors when regularly convened, five shall be competent to act; except for making or altering Rules for the government of the Board, for which purpose the concurrence of twenty-two Directors shall be necessary, and unless where it is otherwise provided for.

Of the first Board of Directors, ~~fourteen~~ 12 members shall at the first, and also at the second annual meeting, retire by ballot amongst themselves; and afterwards the ~~fourteen~~ twelve members entered first on the list shall retire annually, ~~and~~ shall ~~not for one year~~ be re-eligible; their places shall be supplied at the yearly meeting in addition to vacancies caused by death or otherwise; which, when they occur, may be filled either at the yearly or (with notice) at a special meeting of the Chamber; the Directors chosen to supply casual vacancies going out as their prede-

cessors would have done. To every newly-elected President, Vice-President, Director, and Auditor, a written notice of his appointment shall be sent, requesting him to signify his acceptance in writing; which, if he neglect to do for one week, if in Bristol, or if absent for one week after his return, his election shall be void, and the member next in succession upon the ballot shall be considered elected in his place.

VI.—The Board of Directors shall annually, after their election, appoint a Secretary, being a practising Attorney or Solicitor, who shall be the acting and ostensible Officer of the Chamber, and shall receive communications, notices, and applications addressed thereto.

The Secretary shall give all notices, and attend all meetings of the Chamber and Board, the standing Committee, and such other Committees as the Board shall direct, and shall keep a Journal or Minute Book of their proceedings. All Apartments, Books, Papers, and Effects of the Chamber, shall be under his charge, but shall be delivered up by him to the Board on demand: he shall act under the directions and control of the Board, who shall have power to remove him, and to direct such salary to be paid him as they shall think fit.

VII.—A monthly meeting of the Board of Directors, for dispatch of business, shall be held on the first Monday in the month, at any place and hour to be fixed by them, and notified in their Minute Book. And the President, or either of the Vice-Presidents, or any three Directors, may at any time order a special meeting of the Board to be convened.

A standing Committee of six shall be appointed in rotation from the Directors, of whom, the first two on the list shall retire and be replaced at each monthly meeting of the Board. This Committee shall meet weekly, and three members of it shall be a quorum. Its duty shall be, to carry into effect the resolutions of the Board; to receive and attend to applications and other business, and to prepare the same for the Board. Any meetings of the Board, or Weekly Committee, may, for proceeding with business, adjourn at their convenience.

The Board may also, at its discretion, depute Committees of its members to effect or attend to any definite object or special matters; and should the purpose of any such appointment be still in progress and incomplete at the time of the Annual Meeting, and it shall be so reported by the Directors, then such Committee may be continued by the Meeting for any time not exceeding the cur-

rent year, notwithstanding the retirement of any of its members from the Board of Directors.

VIII.—It shall be competent to a meeting of the Board of Directors, at which at least twenty-two Members shall be present, to refuse admission to, or to expel from, the Chamber, any Individual whose conduct has in the opinion of three-fourths of the members present, been disgraceful, either by offending against the law of the land, or by his mercantile or trading transactions having been grossly and notoriously dishonorable. Reserving to such individual the right of appeal to the Chamber, if he shall consider himself aggrieved.

IX.—The Board of Directors shall, after the first year, undertake the arbitration of differences upon matters of Trade and Accounts, where both or either of the parties shall be Members of the Chamber; and the Board shall, at the meeting of the Chamber in January, 1824, propose a Plan for that purpose.

X.—The Funds of the Chamber shall be managed by the Board, and shall be invested in Exchequer Bills, or in other Government Securities in the names of the Treasurers.

Every payment shall be ordered at a meeting of the Board, and by a majority in which five at least of the Directors present shall

concur, and all checks on the Bankers shall be signed at such meetings by the Chairman and two other Directors; but no gratuity shall be voted except by the Chamber at large. The Accounts shall be kept by the Secretary, and shall be examined at every Monthly Meeting of the Board, and be signed by the Chairman.

The Directors may employ a person, giving security to their satisfaction, to collect the Entrance and Subscription Monies, allowing a compensation for his trouble, and they shall not be liable for his default.

XI.—Every Member of the Chamber shall have access at all reasonable times to the Journals, Minute and Account Books of the Chamber and Board of Directors; but shall not take extracts therefrom without consent of the Board. Every application made by Members for the interference of the Board, with the statement of facts on which such application is grounded, shall invariably be made in writing.

REPORT

OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE,

Presented, with the Regulations as prepared by them, to a General Meeting on the 13th Feb. 1823.

THE Committee appointed to frame Rules and Regulations for the formation of a CHAMBER of COMMERCE in BRISTOL, are now prepared to lay before their Fellow-citizens, the result of their proceedings. To assist them in the execution of the task confided to their care, they have had recourse to the Rules and experience of similar Associations at this time flourishing in different parts of the United Kingdom; and the Committee have much satisfaction in stating, that their enquiries on this subject have uniformly been answered by the strongest assurances of the high character in which these various Institutions are publicly recognized; the attention paid by official authorities to their representations and interposition; as well as, of the activity, vigour, and general success by which their proceedings have been marked. And from the practical benefits thus experienced by other places, the Committee are induced to form a sanguine expectation of similar advantages to accrue to BRISTOL, from the establishment of an efficient Chamber of Commerce within its walls.

They do not presume to define all the objects to which the attention of the Chamber

should be directed, or to lay down any precise line of conduct to be pursued by it, conceiving that such a step would exceed the limits of their assigned duty; they will content themselves with explaining *generally*, the intent of the Institution, and referring to the chief matters to which its cognizance will extend.

The Bristol Chamber of Commerce is intended to embody and represent the *Commercial*, *Trading*, and *Manufacturing* Community of the City and its vicinity; and on *this* community at large, and on *every individual* who shares in the advantages of the general prosperity, it relies for the countenance and support, which are necessary to invigorate and give efficiency to its operations. It looks with confidence for this general support, because the *Merchant*, *Manufacturer*, and *Tradesman*, will alike find their interest secured and advanced by its exertions. Land,—and every investment of Capital, the value of which is dependant on the fluctuations of Commerce, must participate in its success; and in short, the only interest to which it will not afford protection or prospect of advantage, is that interest, whatsoever it may be, which is opposed to the *general good*. The views and designs of the Association are strictly and exclusively Commercial; and upon the rigid exclusion from the Chamber of every topic and feeling opposed or irrelevant to its proper objects, its very existence will depend. To every

class and individual, therefore, of the Community, without distinction, its doors are alike open. The subjects which will engage its attention belong properly to the *Public;* they are of great and general concern, but from the natural backwardness of individuals to undertake such matters, they are commonly lost sight of and neglected; in *these* it is the object of the Chamber to interpose and exert the *Public Voice*, as well as in various cases of general interest, in which, through the difficulty of obtaining redress, the exertions of individuals may be stifled, discouraged, or be raised in vain.

It is needless for the Committee to dilate, on the *peculiar* want under which BRISTOL labors, of such a representative Association. The effects of it are apparent on every side: it is seen in the *decay of trade* and *enterprize*; in the *local impediments* which weigh down and paralize commercial activity, and in the apathy with which advantages and opportunities are suffered to escape; but more accurately it may be judged of, by the Commercial improvement which during the same period has attended other places, where Associations for similar purposes have been in operation; and by the necessity at this moment felt in the Metropolis itself, for the establishment of a similar Institution. It may suffice to remark, that *every branch* of this subject and the *utmost practicable alleviation* of the evils referred to, come within the scope and view

of the Association, and are the field of its public labors. The Committee do not give a pledge, that these accumulated inconveniences will be removed by the influence of the Chamber; although even that event might be looked to with confidence, if the active concurrence of the Citizens should support its exertions, and call forth the natural advantages which Bristol possesses. The disease is making alarming advances, the remedy is innocent, and has elsewhere been found efficacious; what then but *despair* or *indifference* can discourage the application of it here?

But in addition to the advantages, which each private member derives, through the prosperity of the Community; in addition to the increased value, which the interests of property will receive from measures of public service rendered by the Chamber, it offers assistance to the man engaged *in Trade*, which he alone can duly appreciate. If to obtain concessions or relief from inconveniences, he has had occasion to approach the Customs, Excise, or other Public Departments of Government, he must be acquainted with the distrust which necessarily attaches to applications, in which personal interest is involved, and must have learnt the too general insufficiency of his own single efforts. He, therefore, can value the assistance and weight of a respectable Association of his Fellow-citizens, who, after examining the cir-

cumstances of his case, would attest and support his representations, and use its influence in forwarding their object.

The Committee would close this part of the subject, by distinctly avowing their conviction, that in the origin and design of the present Institution, neither the slightest glance of disrespect has been intended to the Corporate Societies of this City, nor a wish to interfere with their functions or authority; nor does there, as they conceive, exist a reason, which should prevent the estimable individuals who compose them, from enrolling their names among its Members; they cordially hope, therefore, that their co-operation and support will not be withheld from an Institution, which the Committee believe to be fraught with the highest advantage to the Public good, and for the success of which *Union* is so necessary. The *objects* of the Chamber, it may be observed, are widely distinct from those which employ the attention of any other Body; and are such, as a Constitution similar to its own, is alone qualified to effect. Its sole aim is the furtherance of the *Public good*, and in that of the welfare of each, and of all; and only where the conflicting rights of others are proved unnecessarily burthensome and oppressive to this common interest, may the Chamber interpose its efforts to reduce them within more just and more moderate limits!

The Committee would now call the attention of their Fellow-citizens to the subjoined Rules and Regulations.—Upon Rule the 2nd they would suggest, whether for guarding the respectability of the Chamber, some provision should not be introduced for regulating the admission of Members in future years; and also for expelling Members where it may unfortunately become necessary.* From the 5th Clause, which regulates the Board of Directors, it will be apparent, that a number, and a mode of renewal are proposed, which will give ample room for the representation and protection of all classes of interest in the Chamber. The Committee are well aware, that *Talent*, *Experience* and *Public Spirit*, are not confined to one rank or station; and it is their anxious wish, that at all times the Board should be assisted by the greatest share of these valuable qualities, which can be enlisted in its service; regard being ever had in the selection, to that *probity*, *moderation* and *independence* in the individual, which afford the best promise of success to the efforts of the united body.

The 8th Regulation † has been in substance adopted from similar Institutions, and should

* Rule VIII. was introduced by the General Meeting for this purpose.

† It was thought by the General Meeting, that from press of business the Directors would be prevented from carrying into effect the clause of Arbitration during the present year, and it was therefore postponed, as mentioned in the 9th Regulation.

the intention of the Committee on this head be realized in practice, a most desirable facility will, they hope, be afforded to the settlement of disputes by arbitration.

The Committee beg to say, that upon a consideration of the official business to be transacted by the Secretary, and the necessity of that Officer being entirely under the direction of the Directors, they have conceived the appointment of a professional man to be the most expedient.

In conclusion, they would observe, that the Rules and Regulations which they now submit to the Meeting, are the result of much consideration and research. The Committee by no means assume a tone of confidence as to their exact adaptation to the objects of the Chamber, but they hope to receive credit for having employed their best judgment, and a laborious attention on the subject.

STEPHEN PRUST,

CHAIRMAN.

BRISTOL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 2nd day of January, 1824,

AT THE COMMERCIAL ROOM, BRISTOL,

TO RECEIVE

A REPORT OF THE BOARD'S PROCEEDINGS

ON THE SUBJECT OF

LOCAL TAXATION,

AND TO CONSIDER AND DETERMINE WHAT FURTHER STEPS SHOULD BE ADOPTED.

BRISTOL:
PRINTED BY J. M GUTCH, 15, SMALL STREET.
1824.

ERRATUM.

In page 12, line 4, for "distressed" read "*depressed.*"

BRISTOL
Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT of the BOARD of DIRECTORS to a Special Meeting of the Chamber, held the 2nd day of January 1824, at the Commercial Room, Bristol, to receive a Report of the Board's Proceedings on the subject of LOCAL TAXATION, and to consider and determine what further steps should be adopted.

IN convening the Chamber on the present occasion, the Board have been actuated by two considerations; *first*, that from the pressure of business at the regular Annual Meeting, to take place on the 26th instant, it will be beyond the power of the Chamber to give to the subject for which this Meeting is convened, the degree of attention which its interest and importance demand. And *secondly*, that the proceedings and correspondence of the Board have now arrived at a stage, in which they are anxious to avail themselves of the earliest, and most deliberate determination of the Chamber.

At the first Monthly Meeting after their appointment on the 5th April last, the Board judged it necessary to elect a numerous Committee of their Body, to take into consideration the Local Taxation of the Port. This Committee have been unceasing in their attention to the subject; having sat 46 times, besides having assisted in the deliberations of the Board

to whom they have regularly reported their proceedings for approval and further directions.

The Committee, on investigating the Local Taxation, found the several items of it, by which their attention would be successively engaged, to be—The TOWN DUES and MAYOR'S DUES, the WHARFAGE, CRANEAGE, and PILOTAGE RATES, and the FEES of the QUAY WARDEN, WATER BAILIFF, QUAY PORTERS, and CORN METERS.

The first of which, in order and importance, the TOWN DUES, have hitherto occupied principally the attention of the Committee.

For a detail of the means pursued by the Committee, in order to obtain the most correct information on their subject, the Board refer to the Minutes of the Committee, and to the Appendix, in which the various documents furnished by Merchants and others have been entered, and which being voluminous, are not here inserted. But it may be proper to say, that enquiries have been set on foot, as well amongst their Fellow Citizens engaged in various branches of trade, as in several Manufacturing Districts connected with Bristol, and comparison has been made between the local charges of the leading Commercial Ports of the Kingdom.

The result of these enquiries and comparisons was the early confirmation of the opinion previously entertained by this Board, that the LOCAL TAXATION of this Port has for a long time been, and now is, a cause of most serious injury and of just complaint to its Commercial, Trading and Manufacturing Interests in general.

Whilst the Committee continued its labours in accumulating evidence upon their subject, this Board felt anxious, at the earliest oppor-

tunity, respectfully to approach the Municipal Body, to ascertain how far their view of the subject was in correspondence with that of the Board, and how far that Body would be willing to co-operate with the Board in legislative or other measures, which should be agreed on for affording the degree of relief to the Trade and Commerce of the city, which, on investigation, should appear requisite and practicable.

With this intention, the following Memorial was agreed to by this Board, and presented to the Common Council of the City on the 7th day of August last:

"To the Right Worshipful the MAYOR, the Worshipful the ALDERMEN, and the COMMON COUNCIL of the CITY of BRISTOL, in Common Council assembled.

"The Memorial of the BOARD of DIRECTORS of the BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE, TRADE and MANUFACTURES,

"SHEWETH,—That your Memorialists, in common with their Fellow Citizens, are deeply interested in the Commercial Prosperity of the City of Bristol.

"That they are entrusted by a numerous and respectable body of the Citizens to consider the subject of *Local Taxation*, with a view to the removal, equalization or reduction of the assessments, as upon due investigation may appear to be requisite and practicable: and your Memorialists, therefore, take this occasion respectfully to claim the attention of your Corporate Body.

"That from an anxious and attentive enquiry, it is apparent, that amongst the causes of *depression* and *injury*, which the Commerce and Trade of the City and Port of Bristol have laboured under for a long period of years, the Town Dues, the Mayor's Dues, and other Municipal Imposts and Regulations are most prominent; and it is for the purpose of relief by remission or a material diminution of these Charges, that your Memorialists now approach your Worshipful Body.

"That, from the prompt and effectual assistance which, upon

application, the Government and Legislature have recently granted to several Commercial Towns, by relieving them from local restrictions and imposts injurious to Commerce;—from the general growth and extension of liberal views on the subject of free trade, throughout the empire;—and from the success that has attended the practical application of enlightened principles wherever adopted, your Memorialists are induced more earnestly to press this subject upon your consideration.

"That your Memorialists, relying on your Corporate Body, as Guardians of the public interests of the City, for every degree of assistance of which the case is susceptible, abstain at this period from enumerating particular cases of grievance, as well as from pointing out any specific alteration of existing evils. Soliciting rather such an expression of your sentiments on the subject of this application, as may lead them, and those by whom they are on this occasion deputed, to look for a satisfactory issue to such subsequent communications as they may have with your Worshipful Body.

"Your Memorialists therefore conclude, by respectfully entreating the earliest attention of your Body to the subject of the *depression* and *injury*, which the Commerce and Trade of the City and Port of Bristol are now suffering, through the *weight* and *partiality* of the *Town Dues*, the *Mayor's Dues*, and other *Municipal Imposts* and *Regulations*, with a view to relief by their remission or material diminution.

"And your Memorialists shall ever pray, &c.

"Signed by order and on behalf of the Board,

"JOSEPH COOKSON,

"*7th August*, 1823." "CHAIRMAN.

The Board have to report, that excepting an acknowledgment of the receipt of this Memorial, which was immediately forwarded by his Worship the Mayor, neither any answer to it nor any communication on the subject was received by this Board, until the 20th September, when the Chairman received from his Worship the following letter:

"Council House, 20*th Sept.* 1823.

"Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you, that the Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, Trade, and Manufactures, was laid before the Corporation at their last Meeting; and if you will do me the favor to call at the Council House, on Monday, between one and three o'clock, I will communicate to you the result.

(Signed &c.) "JAMES GEORGE.

"*Joseph Cookson, Esq.* "MAYOR.
Chairman, &c."

The Chairman was accordingly desired by the Committee to attend his Worship, which he did. At their interview a reply to the Board's Memorial was *verbally* communicated to the Chairman by the Mayor, which he immediately requested might be reduced to writing; as he could not undertake the responsibility of bearing a *verbal reply* of such importance. His Worship having observed, that he thought and hoped this verbal communication would be deemed sufficient, requested a short time to consider of Mr. Cookson's request; upon which that Gentleman retired—and on the same day he had the honor of receiving from the Mayor the following letter:

"Council House, Bristol, 22*d Sept.* 1823.

"Sir,—I beg to inform you, that I laid the Memorial received from you, as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, before the Corporation at their last Meeting, and I have the honour to acquaint you, that it was considered *that the Corporation cannot interfere as proposed by the Memorial.* (Signed, &c)

"*Joseph Cookson, Esq.* "JAMES GEORGE,
Chairman, &c." "MAYOR."

Upon receipt of the above letter, the Board lost no time in again addressing the Common Council, by a Memorial presented to that Body

on the 27th September; from which the Chamber cannot but observe, the solicitude with which the Board have endeavoured to obtain the co-operation of the Common Council, in the manner most agreeable to that Body.

SECOND MEMORIAL.

"To the Right Worshipful the MAYOR, the Worshipful the ALDERMEN, and the COMMON COUNCIL of the CITY of BRISTOL, in COMMON COUNCIL assembled.

"The MEMORIAL of the BOARD of DIRECTORS of the BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE, TRADE, and MANUFACTURES,

"SHEWETH,—That your Memorialists beg to acknowledge the reply of your Corporate Body to their Memorial, dated the 7th August last, conveyed to their Chairman through his Worship the Mayor; and deeply regret to find, that your Worshipful Body consider, that you cannot interfere, as proposed by that Memorial.

"That your Memorialists, having addressed your Corporate Body in the sincere hope and belief, that you are not only possessed of the power, but that it must be your wish to relieve and ameliorate the burthens of which your Memorialists complain,—and still believing that redress may and can emanate from you;—again solicit leave to approach you, under an impression, that your hesitation to interfere may have proceeded more from the manner in which the proposition has been submitted to your consideration, that from any objection which can have arisen in your minds to the matter contained in their Memorial.

"Should this unfortunately have been the case, your Memorialists greatly lament, that they should have introduced a subject in their view so important to the welfare of the City, in a manner altogether different from that which they intended.

"Your Memorialists, however, wishing to remove any possible obstacle to the advancement of the desirable object contained in their Memorial, beg expressly to state, that if your Worshipful Body should have taken exception to the manner in which your co-operation is requested, or to the terms in

which their Memorial is couched, they have respectfully to request that you will condescend to point out any more agreeable mode of entering upon the subject: and to assure you, that your Memorialists will endeavour to conform thereto. For your Memorialists would indeed most seriously regret, that any circumstance should arise, at the outset of their labours, to deprive them of the co-operation and support of those, to whom they have always been accustomed to look up with deference and respect, and to consider as the natural guardians of their rights and privileges.

"Your Memorialists further take occasion to state, that the documents which continue to be presented to the Chamber, afford additional proof of the *serious* and *increasing depression* under which the Trade of the Port is labouring, and still must labour, from a continuation of the imposts and regulations alluded to;—they are therefore more earnest in their entreaty, that your Corporate Body will direct its early attention to the relief of the Port from its present oppressive and partial taxation.

"On the other hand, should your Worshipful Body have resolved to dismiss from your minds all further consideration of a subject of such vital importance, they have then to beg, that at your earliest convenience they may be informed of such a resolution, which they cannot but deprecate as one most deeply to be lamented by the commercial and trading interests of the port.

"Your Memorialists are unwilling to close their present appeal, without respectfully assuring your Corporate Body, that in the applications which they have felt it their duty to prefer, they have never entertained the slightest inclination to interfere with the jurisdiction or peculiar privileges of your Body; but that on the contrary, they are solely actuated by an anxiety for the commercial welfare of the City; and that they would most seriously deplore the want of co-operation on your part, in the attempts which your Memorialists are making for the improvement of the trade of the Port.

"And your Memorialists shall ever pray, &c.

(Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON,

"27*th Sept.* 1823." "Chairman.

This Board, understanding that a Meeting of the Common Council would take place on the 29th Sept. were in hopes that their second Memorial would be then considered; but having received a Letter from his Worship the late Mayor, dated the 29th, which stated, that as his Mayoralty would expire that day, he had directed the Letter and Memorial to be handed to his successor in office; the Board resolved, on addressing his Worship the present Mayor as follows:

"Sir, "*Bristol, 6th Oct.* 1823.

"The Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce having been officially informed that their Memorial to the Corporation presented to the late Mayor on the 27th ult. and which they learn has been intrusted to the care of your Worship, will not, in the ordinary course of business, receive the consideration of the Corporate Body until the month of December next, have directed me, as their Chairman, to represent to your Worship that an early consideration of that Memorial is considered by the Memorialists as most important, and is therefore, anxiously desired by them.

"That if any additional reason should be necessary for securing to the subject the earliest attention, they would represent to your Worship and the Corporate Body that the equalization of Duties between England and Ireland which takes place on the 10th inst. opens the prospect of a beneficial increase of trade between the countries in which Bristol is, from its situation, entitled to participate largely, but which advantage, it must be prevented from adequately enjoying, during the continuance of its present Local Taxation.

"Under these circumstances I am directed by the Board respectfully to request, that your Worship will be pleased to convene a Special Meeting of the Corporation at your earliest convenience, to take their Memorial into consideration.

(Signed &c.) "THOMAS STOCK.

"*To the Right Worshipful the Mayor.*"

On the 29th of October his Worship was pleased to inform the Board of his having, in compliance with this request, convened a Special Meeting of the Common Council, and accordingly on the 3d November, the following Document was forwarded to the Board by the Clerks to the Corporation.

"At a SPECIAL MEETING of the COMMON COUNCIL, held at the Council House, in the City of Bristol, on Saturday, the 1st day of November 1823, a MEMORIAL from the BOARD of DIRECTORS of the BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE, TRADE, and MANUFACTURES, signed JOSEPH COOKSON, Chairman, and dated 27th Sept. last, acknowledging the reply of this Corporation to a Memorial dated the 4th of August last, and praying that the subject thereof might be again taken into consideration; and also a Letter dated the 6th day of October last, signed THOMAS STOCK, Chairman of the said Board of Directors, and addressed to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, requesting his Worship would be pleased to convene a Special Meeting of the Corporation to take the said Memorials into consideration; were read,

"WHEREUPON it was unanimously RESOLVED, that this Corporation will not yield in inclination to any class of their Fellow Citizens in an anxious desire to promote the commercial or general prosperity of the City of Bristol; and it having been represented to this Corporation by the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, that the Trade and Commerce of this City are *in a depressed state and still decreasing*, from Local Taxation (of the accuracy of which representation this Corporation is not convinced,) they now invite the Public Bodies of the City to take into their consideration this most important subject, and at their earliest convenience to transmit to this Corporation their respective opinions thereon, with such documents and papers as they may think best adapted to the elucidation of the subject.

"*Ordered*, that Copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Society of Merchants, the Board of Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, and the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of this City."

The Chamber will particularly notice that the Common Council have here attributed to this Board the assertion "*that the trade of this port is in a ~~distressed~~ state, and still* DECREASING, *from Local Taxation.*" Doubting the accuracy of which fact, and apparently for the sole purpose of ascertaining its correctness, they have resolved on the above invitation to the Public Bodies.

depressed

The receipt of the above Document the Board acknowledged by the following Letter:

"SIR, "*8th Nov.* 1823.

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a Document transmitted by Messrs. BRICE and BURGES, containing a Resolution of the Common Council at their Meeting on the 1st inst. which I have laid before the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce.

"And further I am directed by the Board to inform the Common Council, that the subject of their resolution is by them referred to a Committee, for the purpose of framing a Report for the consideration of the Board, with the earnest view of meeting the invitation of the Common Council, as expressed in their Memorial. (Signed &c.)

"*To the Right Worshipful the Mayor.*" "THOMAS STOCK.

The Board lost no time in fulfilling the pledge which had been given by the above Letter, and their attention, with that of the Committee, was sedulously devoted to the subject, until after much deliberation the subjoined Memorial was resolved on.——The Appendix of Documents occupying 28 sides of paper was extended to such length by the Board, in order that the varied operation of the grievances complained of might be fully shewn, and that the several complaints and suggestions contained in a large proportion of the docu-

ments presented to the Board might be brought under the notice of the Common Council.

The Appendix from its length is not inserted here, but is laid on the table for reference.

THIRD MEMORIAL.

"To the Right Worshipful the MAYOR, the Worshipful the ALDERMEN, and the COMMON COUNCIL of the CITY of BRISTOL, in Common Council assembled.

"The Memorial of the BOARD of DIRECTORS of the BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE, TRADE, and MANUFACTURES.

"Since the receipt of the Resolution of your Worshipful Body in reply to the Memorials of this Board, dated 7th August, and 27th September last, your Memorialists have taken the same into their most attentive consideration; and whilst they acknowledge the satisfaction they derive from the anxious desire, which the Common Council express to yield to no class of their Fellow Citizens in promoting the Commercial or general Prosperity of the City of Bristol, they at the same time feel it their duty respectfully to acquaint your Body with what regret and surprise they observe, that the Common Council are not convinced of the accuracy of the representation made by this Board in their Memorials, that the Trade and Commerce of the Port are *seriously depressed and injured by Local Taxation.*

"Without a knowledge of the result of the opinions, which your Body has solicited from the Society of Merchants and the Bristol Dock Company, and even admitting a possibility, that the documemts to be returned by these Bodies may shew an increase in their revenues, this Board still presume to think, that unaccompanied with explanatory evidence of the causes which have given rise to such increase, if any, without a reference being at the same time made by the Common Council to the general increase of the trade and commerce of the kingdom at large, and of some ports in particular; and unless it can be shewn, that Bristol enjoys a fair share of this increased commerce, in proportion to the natural advantages of her situation and the capital of her merchants, a judgment to be formed upon such opinions and premises, will be most fallacious.

" The Board further submit, that as the Documents published by Authority do exhibit a general increase in the Commerce of the Country, the Common Council will no doubt think it right to admit into its view of the subject, to what extent the Port of Bristol shares therein; and if it should not be found to do so in a degree proportionate to the means within its reach, then whether the TOWN DUES, MAYOR'S DUES, and other MUNICIPAL IMPOSTS do not present a prominent impediment to the Port of Bristol assuming its proper and relative commercial rank.

" That it has not its share in the general prosperity, is evidenced by the deserted appearance of the Quays of the Port during a great part of the year, as well as by the numerous Warehouses in the City which are unoccupied and daily decreasing in value, while in other ports a demand for enlarged accommodation is as steadily increasing.

" In proof that this depressed state of the Trade and Commerce of the Port is to be attributed in a principal degree to its Local Taxation, the Board submit, agreeably to the invitation contained in the resolutions of the Common Council, the several Documents accompanying this Memorial, lettered A to M inclusive, the originals of which the Board will at all times be ready to produce.

" Letter A—Is a Communication from Merchants engaged in the Iron Trade in Bristol, which details the increasing rivalry to Bristol of the ports of Cardiff and Newport; the comparative advantages of the latter in its River and Port Charges, and the impediments which the AD VALOREM TOWN DUES in Bristol throw in the way of obtaining Bale Goods, to assort with a cargo of Iron, whereby the freight of Iron is enhanced to 30s. and 35s. per ton, whilst 5s. and 10s. only are paid from London and Liverpool.

" Letter B—Is a representation from Wharfingers, Trow-Owners, and others interested in the Severn Trade; in which they state, that of late years the greater proportion of the products and manufactures of the Counties of Salop, Stafford, Warwick, Worcester, and Gloucester, which formerly came to Bristol for exportation, is now, from several causes, diverted from this Port to those of London and Liverpool; amongst

which causes they assert, that the high Local Charges of Bristol are prominent, and particularly the AD VALOREM TOWN DUES, of which they adduce a striking example.

Letter C—Contains a Statement from Warehousemen and Coopers, in which is pointed out the serious depreciation of the value of Warehouses in Bristol; that Cotton has ceased to be imported to the extent it formerly was, as also Staves, with which they are now partly supplied from Liverpool, to the enhancement of the cost of their manufactured article; all which they attribute to the scarcity of vessels from America, principally arising from the want of return cargoes to that country.

"Letter D—Contains a communication from Merchants engaged in general Commerce, accompanied with Statements of the Local Charges in Bristol compared with London, Liverpool, and Hull, shewing that on the Shipment of

	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
13 Bales of Cloth in *Bristol* they are	12	5	1	—in *Liverpool* only	3	18	0
97 Packages of Manchester Goods	42	12	5	—in ditto ...	3	3	2

And on the Importation of

19 Bales Silk to *Bristol*	29	15	4	—in *London* ...	5	8	1
300 Bales Clover Seed to ditto ...	16	3	4	—in ditto ...	7	10	0
				—in *Hull* .	4	18	4
56 Tons Olive Oil	29	17	4	—in ditto ...	5	12	0
61 Tons 9 Cwt. Russia Flax ...	45	13	0	—in ditto ...	10	15	0

Also that the Port Charges on a Vessel of 292 Tons measurement, are in Bristol £73. 18s. 7d.—in Liverpool £47. 13s. 6d.

"Letter E—Shews that when the *Town Dues* were reduced to a comparatively moderate rate per bale to a Merchant in this city, he exported a large quantity of Bale Goods; but on renewal of the AD VALOREM DUTY he was no longer able to send any, or but a very small quantity. It asserts also, that to avoid the Town Dues, the Clothiers of Wilts and Somerset send their goods by land through Bristol to Liverpool, to be shipped from that port.

"Letters F & F—State as reasons for the Clothiers and Carpet Manufacturers not sending their goods to America through Bristol, the heavy Town Dues and uncertainty of the departure of vessels from Bristol.

"Letter G—States the circumstance of a Clothier of Wottonunderedge having purchased the freedom of this city and taken

a counting-house in it, in order to avoid the Town Dues on the goods which he exported (principally to Ireland and America).

"N. B. The Board have it in their power to state, that this Clothier is since deceased, and the establishment in this city given up; and that now his successors send their Cloths to Liverpool for exportation to a great amount.

"Letter H—Is a communication from Merchants engaged in the Timber Trade andsothers; drawing a comparison between the charges at Bristol and at Chepstow on a Ship of 350 tons with a cargo of Timber; the Bristol charges being £111. 14s. 6d. and the Chepstow only £14. 16s. 6d.; and shewing that in consequence of this enormous difference, Ship-Owners are reluctant to charter their vessels to Bristol, unless at higher rates of freight; owing to which causes Chepstow and other minor ports, which were formerly supplied with Timber from this Port, now import it direct from the Baltic and America; they rank the Town Dues amongst the most oppressive charges of the Port.

"Letter I—Is a Letter from a Merchant of Philadelphia, who states that East-India produce may now be imported through England for America, upon lower terms than direct, owing to the low rate of Exchange in India, and there being no Duty on Goods shipped to England; he would wish to transact this business through the medium of Bristol, but finds the Town Dues as at present chargeable, an obstacle to such an operation.

"Letter K—States that almost the whole of the Stockings sent to America are shipped from London, though they may be equally well shipped from Bristol, but for the Ad valorem Town Dues and other charges, which on 10 trusses, value £600, amount to £3. 9s. 7d. which in London would be only 7s. 6d. and in Liverpool 5s. 10d. It states further, that an individual in Worcester importing 1344 Kid Skins to London, paid only 8s. 9d. and on about half the number to Bristol, 19s. 11d.

"Letter L—States that a firm in this city having bought two parcels of foreign Iron, the one in London the other in Bristol, find that the Iron in London can be exported to the Mediterranean at a freight not exceeding 10s. per ton, but 30s. has been demanded for that in Bristol, for want of light goods to accompany it.

"Letter M—Is a communication from a firm engaged in the

African trade, which states the comparative charges at Bristol and Liverpool upon numerous articles, the difference in which they state as the reason why the African trade, which was once carried on here to a great extent, is now nearly all gone.

"YOUR MEMORIALISTS respectfully present these documents to the consideration of the Common Council, as part only of those in their possession; and they trust that without adding to their number, they may confidently anticipate that by a perusal of them, the Common Council will be convinced of the accuracy of the representations made by this Board—that the Trade and Commerce of the City are seriously depressed and injured by Local Taxation.

"The Board would beg to remind the Common Council, that the question so far from being confined to the narrow limits of any specific dues to which the Common Council may consider themselves entitled, is, in the opinion of the Board, of much greater magnitude, viz. whether by a continuation of the present oppressive charges of Town Dues, Mayor's Dues, and other injurious Municipal Imposts, the general mercantile, trading, and manufacturing interests of the city, are not in danger of suffering material injury; and whether from the commerce of the port being gradually drawn away, through the inducement of more moderate charges in neighbouring and distant ports, the REVENUES OF THE PUBLIC BODIES THEMSELVES, as well as of individuals, will not be subject eventually to a serious diminution.

"In conclusion your Memorialists respectfully request, that they may be explicitly informed, at the earliest convenience of the Common Council, whether any co-operation from their Body in effecting the relief prayed for in the Memorials of the Board may be expected.

"Signed by order and on behalf of the Board.

"JOSEPH COOKSON,

"*Bristol*, 1*st December* 1823." "CHAIRMAN.

By this Memorial it will appear, that the Board have endeavoured to their utmost to bring back the Common Council to the real question at issue, viz. *Whether the Trade and Commerce*

of the Port are not seriously depressed and injured by Local Taxation?

An acknowledgment of the receipt of this Memorial was immediately forwarded by the Mayor, who promised to lay it before the Common Council at their meeting on the 10th of December. No answer however having been received on the 18th, a Deputation from the Board waited on his Worship, to request that he would have the goodness to inform them, when the Board might be favored with an answer. To which Deputation his Worship expressed himself, much to the effect of the subjoined Letter:

"*Council House, Bristol,*

"SIR, *18th Dec.* 1823.

"We are directed by the Mayor, in reply to the application of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, dated this day, to inform you, that the Memorial referred to was laid before the Common Council at their Meeting on the 10th inst. but in the absence of any Communications from the Society of Merchants, or the Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, the Corporation were unable to come to any determination on the subject.

(Signed, &c.) "BRICE and BURGES.

"*The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Bristol.*"

After deliberating on the indefinite delay, which it was feared might follow on the course of proceeding thus adopted by the Common Council, this Board thought it right to address the following Letter to the Mayor:

"SIR, "*Bristol, 22nd Dec.* 1823.

"The Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce beg to acknowledge the receipt of a Letter from Messrs BRICE and BURGES, stating that in the absence of any communications from the Society of Merchant Venturers or the

Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, the Corporation were unable to come to any determination on the subject of the several Memorials of the Board.

"I am now directed by the Board to express its disappointment at the determination of the Common Council being delayed, in consequence of the communications solicited from the above respectable Bodies not having been received, inasmuch as the application addressed to them belongs rather to an inquiry—*Whether the Trade of Bristol at one period as compared with another has decreased or otherwise?* and which point when ascertained will not, it is conceived, meet the question at issue between the Common Council and the Chamber of Commerce; viz.

"*Whether the Municipal Taxation with which the Port of Bristol is burthened, has not been a prominent cause of its having failed to share in the general and increasing prosperity of the Kingdom to that extent, to which from its local advantages it is entitled? And whether the removal, equalization. or reduction of this Taxation, as may be practicable, is not absolutely necessary to the commercial and general prosperity of the City?*

"The Board do therefore earnestly hope, that this question may not be delayed or lost sight of, in an attention to any other points not directly relevant to it; and that the Common Council will resume the consideration of the Board's Memorials upon their own merits with a view to granting the relief prayed for.

"The Board further direct me to say, that the necessity for their making a Report to the Chamber at a very early day, must be their apology for pressing their applications to your Worship on the subject.

(Signed, &c.) "JOSEPH COOKSON,
"Vice President.

"*To the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Bristol.*"

To this Letter no reply whatever has, up to the present time, been received.

The Chamber, having thus been put into possession of the Communications, which have taken place between the Common Council and

the Board on this important subject, cannot but have noticed, that the Common Council, instead of meeting the question, to which the Board since its Memorial of the 7th August, has not ceased to draw the attention of that Body, and instead of replying to the facts furnished by this Board, have hitherto adhered to a determination to confine their enquiries to the single point—Whether there has been a positive decrease in the Trade of the Port? A course of proceeding on which this Board has to express its sentiments of surprise and regret.

In its several communications with the Common Council, the Board hope that it has not departed from that respect which is due to the Municipal Body; at the same time considering the question one of PROPERTY only, and on which redress is due to the Mercantile Interests of the City, it trusts, that it has asserted the claims of those interests, in a manner which will meet the approval and support of the Chamber.

Should any individual present conceive that in the Memorials of the Board, and the Documents appended to them, which have been read, the prejudicial effects of the Town Dues upon the general Trade of the Port have been overrated; he has probably not considered, that it is not the amount of duty collected, but that which is avoided, that produces the evil; and by which the extent of it is to be measured. The effect is not to be estimated by considering how many Bales of Cloth and Packages of Indigo pay it, but how many have for years past been lost to this Port, by going to London and Liverpool to escape it.—Suppose a Toll of one Farthing to be taken at each end of the principal Street of our City for every Passenger; would the Trade of that Street continue? Sup-

pose further, that £10 per annum only were thus collected, would the small amount of the collection be a proof that the Toll was not injurious? would it not rather prove of itself, that it had effectually ruined the Street as a thoroughfare. Such a Toll are the Town Dues. Supposing them for a moment to afford a revenue, which should appear inconsiderable upon the extent of Trade, which Bristol still possesses; that circumstance is the best possible reason for the abolition of an Impost, which is injurious without being productive; but it must be seen, that the amount of the collection can be inconsiderable only because the thoroughfare is destroyed.

Nor does the diminution of the Export of any particular articles produce a loss only to the extent of the dues and profits on the articles themselves; it affects vitally other branches of Commerce, by preventing the very necessary assortment of cargoes, and the expeditious outfit and dispatch of ships; which circumstances are constantly assigned by foreign Merchants, as their reason for not using our Port.

The sum paid for *ad valorem* Town Dues, as they are generally collected, exceed the Government Export Duty; and this amount is always liable to be further increased (as it sometimes is) at the mere pleasure of the Common Council to 50 per cent. more. A general Commission Trade, of all branches the most beneficial, and the source of so much wealth and prosperity to Liverpool, is by such Dues nearly excluded from our Port. No Stranger will consign to, or order from Bristol, so long as the difference of prices in its Market compared with other Ports, which are open to him, will not indemnify him for the excess of its local charges.

And the document lettered I, in the Appendix submitted to the Common Council, proves that the Town Dues preclude Bristol at this time, from being able to enjoy a beneficial Trade between America and the East-Indies through this Port; which is thus driven to other Ports;—the same impediments must present themselves to any share being taken in the South American Trade, and in short, to the importation of all articles of high value. The Irish Trade has been freed from every restriction by our Government, and set nearly on a footing with our Coasting Trade. But the Town Dues still continue to press with their banefnl influence upon it, and the injurious result must soon be apparent. Trade, it may be observed, has of late years changed its channels; instead of the Merchant wholly supporting it by his Capital; to a very great extent, the Manufacturer in this Country has become the Merchant, and the Grower of Cotton and other foreign produce, the Shipper, of his own productions; such a Trade is evidently to the Merchant a Commission Trade. Liverpool and Glasgow have met this change, and given encouragement to it by the moderation of their charges both public and mercantile. Bristol adheres to its discouraging duties and its antiquated customs, and shares but inconsiderably in these great advantages. The Common Council *have* been able, heretofore, to see the ruinous effect of the *ad valorem* Town Dues upon the Commerce of the City; for Sugar and Wool, the principal articles of import, substantially enjoy an exemption from these charges, by the substitution of a small package rate, and the Trade in them has still continued—can it then be less necessary, that the general Mercantile Interests of the Port should obtain as much

consideration for their injuries, as the few selected and favoured branches?

The Board however regret, that they have to point out to the Chamber, what will have appeared from the whole correspondence now before it. That up to the present time the Common Council have expressed no satisfactory disposition to meet the Board in conference or otherwise, with a view to remove difficulties or to do away a misunderstandiug, by which the question at issue may be drawn from the ground of its merits into discussions productive only of delay;—delay which the Board consider in every point of view to be injurious, and which it becomes this Chamber by every means in its power to prevent. The means, which have suggested themselves for this end, are an application by Memorial to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the Board of Trade, representing the Burthens under which the Trade of Bristol is oppressed and discouraged; accompanied with copies of the documents already submitted to the Common Council, and praying for the support of his Majesty's Government and the Board of Trade in such application, as the Chamber may find it necessary to make to Parliament for redress; and offering *viva voce* evidence to prove the allegations in the documents produced.

In submitting to the Chamber the propriety of this step being now taken, the Board have to call its most serious attention to the circumstance of the early meeting of Parliament on the 3rd February; and to the absolute necessity of laying before his Majesty's Government, the nature and extent of their complaints some time previously to the meeting of Parliament, that they may profit by such co-operation as the

justice of the cause and the consideration of the general advancement of Trade may induce the Government to give to any application of the Chamber to the Legislature.

It will be obvious, therefore, that the latest moments are now passing, in which this object can be effected, with a view to the approaching Session of Parliament; and it is now submitted entirely to the discretion and determination of the Chamber, how far the benefits to be expected from awaiting the further replies of the Common Council will counterbalance the certainty of losing the ensuing Session of Parliament, and the chances of having to appeal to a different Legislature, and a less wise and liberal policy than now regulates the measures of his Majesty's Government in relation to the Trade of the Country.

With regard to the ultimate results of the suggested application the Board has reason to believe, that a Taxation so destructive of the sources from which it is raised, and so injurious, as well to the Freemen for whose benefit it professes to be exacted, as to the general interests of the Port, will never be allowed to continue, when properly represented to the Legislature. But to enable the Board to accomplish this great object, the whole weight and influence of the Chamber must be afforded.

(Signed) JOSEPH COOKSON,
Vice-President.

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, Friday, 2d Jan. 1824.

AT a numerous Meeting of the Chamber, specially convened to receive the Report of the Board of Directors, on the subject of *Local Taxation*, and to consider and determine what further steps should be adopted by the Board:

Mr. Vice-President STOCK in the Chair.

The foregoing Report of the Board having been read, IT WAS RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

Firstly—That the Report now read be received and approved, and that it be forthwith printed and distributed at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Secondly—That the Chamber do pursue the recommendation of the Board of Directors, and that Memorials prepared in conformity to the Report now read, be presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the Board of Trade, through the Members for the City.

That the Board of Directors shall prepare and dispatch such Memorials, the same being signed by the President on behalf of the Chamber; and that the Board shall take all necessary measures for carrying these Resolutions into effect.

Thirdly—That a Letter, signed by the President, be addressed to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, with a printed Copy of the Report now

read to the Chamber, and of the Memorials to be presented to the Board of Trade, and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, stating that the steps now adopted by the Chamber through their Memorials to his Majesty's Counsellors, have been prompted by the exigency imposed upon the Chamber, through the shortness of the period allowed for their efficient operation; and that it is still the earnest hope and desire of this Chamber to be favoured with the co-operation of the Common Council, in any legislative or other measures, necessary to be adopted by the Chamber for obtaining the desired relief.

Fourthly—That for the specific purpose of enabling the Board to pursue the object pointed out in their Report, a Subscription be now entered into by the Members of the Chamber; and that the Citizens at large, and others interested in the welfare of the City, be solicited to contribute thereto. That the amount collected be placed to a distinct Account with the Treasurers; and that Subscription Books do lie open at the Bar of these Rooms, with the Treasurers; the other Bankers who are Members of the Chamber; and at the Secretary's Office.

Fifthly—That the thanks of the Chamber be given to the Representatives of the City in Parliament, for the assistance which they have already afforded to the Board; and that they be requested to present and support the present applications.

Sixthly—That Copies of the Report now read and of these Resolutions be transmitted to the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Board of Directors of the Dock Company, and that their co-operation in the proposed measures be requested.

Seventhly—That the thanks of the Chamber be given to the Board of Directors for their valuable services, and for the very able Report submitted to the Chamber this day.

(Signed) THOMAS STOCK,
Chairman.

Mr. Vice-President Stock having left the Chair, it was Resolved *Unanimously* by the Chamber, that the thanks of the Meeting be given to him for his able conduct in the Chair.

GRESLEY HELLICAR,
Secretary.

APPENDIX OF DOCUMENTS

Enumerated and referred to in the foregoing Report, and annexed to the 3rd Memorial presented to the Common Council.

(Copy) *Letter* A.

"The undersigned Merchants, engaged in the Iron Trade in Bristol, understanding that the subject of the Local Taxation of this Port has been brought under the consideration of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, take occasion to represent the danger, which they cannot but apprehend from the continuance of such taxation, to the Iron Trade of this city; connected closely as it is with its general Commerce. It is notorious, that the towns of Cardiff and Newport were formerly inconsiderable ports; having a trade extended scarcely beyond that of exporting to Bristol their Agricultural produce, with a small quantity of Iron and Tin plates made in the neighbourhood; and receiving in return articles of manufacture and foreign produce for their consumption. The opening, however, of the Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire Canals, by facilitating the conveyance of Iron and Coal from the interior, has so greatly promoted the Iron manufacture, that, what by means of their trade in that article, and in the Coal brought from the Collieries on the line of these Canals, these ports, so far from being merely tributary, have acquired a degree of commercial importance, which bids fair to rival Bristol in its domestic and foreign trade. Newport, formerly a branch of the port of Cardiff, has lately obtained the privilege of an independent Custom-House; it has a fine river, so easy of access, as to admit of a large vessel being navigated up and down, under a charge for pilotage of about one guinea only; while the corresponding charge, with the expence of towage, &c. to and from Brsstol, amounts to upwards of *twenty-five pounds!!* Newport being moreover exempted from all the further charges under the heads of Town Dues, Dock Dues, &c.—The Directors must have noticed with satisfaction, that the Chamber of Commerce has to rank amongst its members seven Firms concerned in the Iron Trade of Cardiff and Newport. Notwithstanding, however, this manifestation of a willingness to unite with the Mercantile Interests of Bristol, the Board cannot suppose but the Manufacturers and Merchants connected with the ports of Cardiff and Newport are fully aware of the natural and acquired advantages they possess. In point of fact they well know, that every manufacture dependent on fuel, of which Bristol has to boast the possession, such as Glass-houses, Sugar-Houses, Potteries, Pipe Manufactories, &c. may be established there, as well if not better than in Bristol; neither is there any reason, why Cotton and other Manufactories might not be as advantageously carried on. These being once introduced at Cardiff and Newport with the Bonding System, and Bristol burthened with its present heavy charges of Pilotage, Town Dues, Dock Dues, &c. instead of recovering its rank of commercial impor-

tance, may find its comparatively diminished commerce still further reduced, and as to the export of Iron nearly annihilated; and with all its conveniences of Docks, Warehouses, &c. it will then probably be placed, with respect to its flourishing rivals, as the once opulent town of Lancaster now is compared with Liverpool. The undersigned also wish to point out the *particular* pressure of the Local Dues of Bristol on its Iron trade. In London and Liverpool vessels can be provided with such a profusion of Bale and other light Goods, that they take out Iron to the Mediterranean at merely a Ballast freight, not exceeding from 5s. to 10s. per ton, whilst from Bristol 30s. to 35s. is paid, and a similar disadvantage is experienced in shipping Iron to America and other quarters; and when it is considered that such a difference exists in the cost of conveyance upon an article, worth as it is at the present moment no more than £7. per ton, the Board will be convinced, how great must be the disadvantage under which the Iron trade of Bristol labours on this account. On application to the Manufacturers and Shippers of Bale Goods, *they assign as a principal reason for not shipping through this port*, that by so doing they should be exposed to the heavy charges of Town Dues and other local expences! The extent of the Iron Trade at the ports of Cardiff and Newport is greater, it is apprehended, than is generally supposed; the quantity brought to those places for shipment being not less than 3,000 tons per week, or about 150,000 tons annually. It is not here meant to encourage an expectation, that the whole of this Iron can be brought through the port of Bristol under any abatement of the Local Charges, but the undersigned do mean to represent, *that it is very impolitic in the public authorities to persevere in burthening this trade with any part of these charges*, which it is in their power to abate, and which shall appear to be inconsistent with the present liberal and enlarged views of commerce. The undersigned trust, that their example in thus addressing the Board will bring forward the individuals equally interested in other branches of trade, to represent the particular grievances under which they may labour, that thereby a mass of evidence may be produced which will carry irresistible weight; convincing the PublicAuthorities, that they will only fulfil their duty as guardiaus of the public welfare by annulling exactions, which so evidently tend to drive commerce from the city.

(Signed)

" Harford Brothers & Co.	W. D. & W. E. Acraman
Protheroe & Hunt	Peter Maze and Son
Reynolds, Tomlinson & Co.	Christopher Pope & Co.
Joseph Smith	Jno. Winwood & Co.
Harley & Lang	Geo. Eaton & Sons
Robertson & Fothergill	G.W. Pritchett & Wick Iron Co.
Richard Nott	John Howell
Wait & James	John Webb."

" Bristol, 14th August, 1823."

(*Copy*) *Letter* B.

"In compliance with the invitation expressed in the Circular of the Board of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce accompanying the representation of the Iron Trade, the undersigned Wharfingers, Trow Owners, and others interested in the Severn Trade, have now to represent for the consideration of the Board, the state of this part of the Commerce of the port.

"The number of trows which come down the Severn to this port every spring tide, may be estimated at twenty-eight, burthening together from 1800 to 2000 tons, bringing down cotton and woollen manufactures of various descriptions, lead, iron, hardware, fire-bricks, and clay, earthenware, salt, grain, &c. the manufacture and produce of the several counties of York, Lancaster, Nottingham, Derby, Salop, Warwick, Worcester, and Gloucester, taking back sugar, wool, tallow, hides, and other foreign produce, as well as the productions of Ireland, Wales, and the Southern and Western counties.

"The rate of conveyance from the counties of York, Lancaster, Derby, and Nottingham, being less to Liverpool, it might not be reasonable to expect much of their products to come through this port for exportation.

"But from Salop, Stafford, Warwick, Worcester and Gloucester, the expences are either equal or decidedly less to Bristol; the trade from these counties ought therefore to flow principally through this port for all foreign countries, yet by far the greater proportion of their manufactures which formerly came through Bristol, are now taken to Liverpool and London for exportation.

"The loss of so large a portion of the natural trade of Bristol may be attributed to various causes; first, the facility of conveyance by daily internal navigation to London and Liverpool, and the risk on the other hand of the navigation between Bristol and Gloucester; secondly, the frequency for foreign shipments at the former ports; and lastly, the high local charges of Bristol, consisting of Town dues and Wharfage on the cargo, and and Mayor's dues, Dock dues, and River charges on the ship.

"Chepstow and even Gloucester have of late years acquired a foreign trade, importing timber, hemp, wine, and other foreign goods, which formerly came through the port of Bristol.

"The loss of which may be ascribed to one or more of the before-enumerated causes; besides which it is notorious that great exertions have been made, and are now making, to increase the trade of Gloucester by the completion of the Berkeley Canal.

"This project, prosecuted as it is by parties unconnected with Bristol, is no doubt intended to render the trade of the Severn independent of this port; and in the event of success, all the materials for the use of the different manufactories, as well as all foreign productions which at present pass through Bristol, will no doubt go through the Berkeley Canal direct to Gloucester. It follows of course, that the exportation of the productions connected with the Severn navigation, will be likely to go through the same channel; thus leaving Bristol the supply only of its own internal trade.

"Had it been practicable to form an internal navigation from

Gloucester to this port, the rivalship of the two ports might have been avoided, and the trade of Bristol with the Severn navigation would have been preserved; but as it is, the owners of trows, and the trade of this port, are alike in danger.

"Whilst Bristol has thus to contend against the competition of Chepstow and Gloucester, which is growing every day more considerable,—how imperative does it become on those who should feel the warmest interest in the prosperity of the port, to remove every impediment of a local kind which obstructs the exportation and importation of the manufacturing produce of the counties before mentioned! The most prominent of these impediments are Town Dues on goods, which on a package of the value of £500. amount to upwards of £3, whilst in Liverpool they do not exceed 6d. So long as such exactions are continued, the trade of this port must inevitably languish.

"Its gradual decay must be anticipated with a proportionate deterioration of fixed property of every description which the city contains.

(Signed)

"John & George Ames	Jas. Amory, for Humphry Brown
Barnett, Meaby & Co.	J. Stroud, for John Jones
E. Holmes, for Robert Jones	John Banks, for Messrs. Pickford & Co.
James Amory, for Belsham & Reynolds	William Proudfoot, for John Soule.
George & William Devey	

"Bristol, 10th October, 1823."

(Copy) *Letter* C.

"To the Local Taxation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce.

"Gentlemen,

"The undersigned beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, together with the Memorial of the Iron Trade of Bristol, complaining of the serious incumbrances which their branch of commerce is labouring under, owing to the enormous amount of dues, &c. peculiar in their extent to the port of Bristol, and to which they attribute principally the present alarming decline in their export trade.

"Agreeably to your request, we have drawn up a statement of certain grievances applicable to our line of business, which will be found to confirm the statement of the Iron Trade, and may be easily traced to the same source.

"We will first advert to our once flourishing commerce with America, but which from the oppression alluded to, we regret to state, is now comparatively excluded from our port,—a port which disencumbered from these heavy charges, would be found peculiarly convenient to the manufacturers in our vicinity for the exportation of woollen, cotton, bale, hardware, and other commodities.

"Besides the increase of business which such a change would afford to Coopers and Warehouse-keepers, it would also beneficially accommodate American vessels with one of their principal objects, namely, a profitable homeward freight, and who would see the advantage of trading with us.

"Instead of which we have to observe, that the present unprecedented amount of our municipal taxes has driven away our manufacturing traders to other ports; and therefore having little or nothing to return to America with, their vessels seldom visit us, or when they do, their freight is so much higher than what they charge to other ports, where they expect a remuneration from returning cargoes, that our business, as might be expected, is very seriously injured.

"We here particularly refer to that essential article in the business of a Cooper, American Staves, which from the circumstance of their increased freight, are advanced in price to us so much above what they are purchased for at other places, that we are obliged to purchase of our rivals, and to correspond with Liverpool for our supply. Again, in the case of finished goods, it will be perceived that with the addition of Commission, Insurance, Freight, &c. upon their staple article brought from Liverpool, it is impossible for Bristol Coopers to enter into any fair competition with their rivals in Liverpool, and that merchants being influenced by these attractions to try a cheaper market, our export orders must naturally diminish, and unless prevented by the removal of the heavy rates now charged, will soon exhibit alarming symptoms of complete annihilation.

"Upon the same principle and for the same reasons, we find the business of Warehouse-keeping in Bristol materially declining. The importation of Cotton, in particular, was formerly carried on in the port of Bristol to a very large amount, and our Warehouses in consequence were profitably occupied; this is no longer the case, as the liberality found in other ports is becoming more and more known, and our port consequently is more neglected.

"Our Warehouses thus deprived of their proper supply of stores, a rapid loss of business is the consequence, as might be reasonably anticipated; the inference from which is obvious, that the impolitic and injurious impositions of Town Dues, Mayor's Dues, Cranage, Quay Warden, Haven Master, and excessive Pilotage, instead of producing their accustomed revenue, as in our former prosperous situation, will shortly exhaust the only source whence they have been supplied, the importation of Cotton and other various articles will gradually decline until they become extinct, but which result the persevering exertions of your Committee, we trust, will yet happily prevent.

"Before we conclude, we would just submit to your reflection the inseparable connexion which it may be easily conceived exists between the prosperity of the occupations alluded to and those of Shipwrights, Ship-chandlers, Rope-makers, Sail-makers, and every branch of navigation.

"Nor can we omit referring to a very important consequence of the whole, we mean the very serious depreciation of the value of Warehouse property, which is more alarming, as it

necessarily differs from all other description of building in value, from the difficulty of converting them to any other purpose.

"When the sums expended in these speculations, amounting on a moderate calculation to one hundred thousand pounds, are taken into account, it must add to the weight of every point to which we solicit the attention of your Committee.

"You will therefore permit us to conclude by observing, that without some speedy and effectual interference, we foresee that our Port must shortly sink into a state of comparative insignificance, and then, when too late, we shall have to lament the day when Bristol received her municipal charters, which, though given to protect our once highly favoured city, have, through mis-management, been perverted to her degradation.

(Signed)

"Henry Bush
Thomas Rankin
John Bangley
Philip Masey
J. W. & J. M. Masey
Robert Powell
William Cooke."

(Copy) *Letter* D.

"To the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce engaged in an Enquiry into the Local Taxation of the City of Bristol.

"Gentlemen,

"In corroboration of the general belief and experience that the trade of this Port is greatly injured by its partial and heavy local charges on the importation and exportation of goods and merchandize levied on strangers or persons not free of the city, enormous in amount on many articles, when compared with those paid at Liverpool, London and Hull, the undersigned have judged it proper to furnish you with a few statements of local charges, to which sundry articles are liable when exported or imported at Bristol, together with counter statements of the local charges to which similar goods would be subject at some of the before-mentioned Ports. These statements are derived either from transactions which have taken place within our own mercantile practice and experience, or from the inspection of the accounts of others.

"The decline of the trade of this once-flourishing port in several branches of commerce, and its stagnation in others when compared with the trade of the above-named ports, we principally attribute to its oppressive local charges, the heaviest of which the *Town Dues* being levied by an *ad valorem* duty, does by its principle divert innumerable valuable articles from the commerce of this port.

"Bristol, from its local situation, were it not for the Town Dues and other heavy Port Charges, would be the principal place of exportation for the woollen manufactures of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Somersetshire, destined for either the

United States, British America, Spain, Portugal, and the ports of the Mediterranean; as also for the hempen and flaxen manufactures of Devonshire and the other neighbouring country, nearly the whole of which are at present sent for shipment to London and Liverpool.

"The cotton and leather manufactures of Worcestershire, with the carpetting made at Kidderminster and Cirencester, as also the numerous articles of hardware, japan, brass, &c. &c. manufactured at Birmingham and the neighbouring country would probably be sent through this port for exportation, were these oppressive charges removed.

"The direction of the above-named manufactures being diverted from their true and natural course, Bristol is deprived of very valuable and bulky assortments of light goods wherewith to load her vessels, and which consequently operates as a preventive to vessels visiting this port; but let this prohibition or cause be removed, so as to allow merchants to import and export goods at Bristol on equal terms with London, Liverpool, Hull, &c., it may fairly be presumed we shall have a sufficiency of goods for exportation, and which will soon attract an abundance of vessels to the port looking for freight and employment, in addition to the encreased number that will be induced to come with cargoes of merchandize, on the removal of the heavy charges on importation.

(Signed)

"Harman Visger	Reynolds, Tomlinson & Co.
Adrian Moens	Wm. Bushell & Co.
William Scott	Thos. Thorne & Co.
Wait & James	Harford, Brothers, & Co."

"Bristol, 5th November, 1823."

"Account of Charges on 13 Bales of Cloth (if shipped from Bristol for any foreign port on account of a person not a freeman of the city) value £1839. 19s. 3d.

Export Duty the same as at every other port.

Entry - - - - - -	£0	5	0
Haulage 6s. 6d.—Cranage 3s. 3d. - - -	0	9	9
Agency for forwarding 2s. each - - -	1	6	0
Town Dues on £1800, at 2d. in the pound, on two-thirds of the value - - - -	10	0	0
Wharfage 4d. each - - - - -	0	4	4
	£12	5	1

"Account of Charges on a similar shipment made from Liverpool.

Export Duty the same as at every other port.

Agency for Forwarding, Shipping, Town Dues, Dock Dues, Cartage and Wharfage, at 6s. per bale - - - - - -	£3	18	0
Difference in favour of Liverpool - - -	8	7	1

" The above charges at Liverpool are taken from an Invoice of 13 Bales of Cloth, value £1839. 19s. 3d. which were shipped from Liverpool on account of a manufacturer in the county of Gloucester, and in the vicinity of Bristol.

" The Bristol charges are made from what has been experienced on shipments of cloth from thence.

(Signed)

* * * * * * *

"Bristol, 5th November, 1823."

" Proformâ Account of Local Charges on 97 Packages of Manchester Goods shipped at Bristol, by and for account of a Person not free of the City, value £7,436. 4s. 5d.

Export Duty the same as at all other Ports.

Entries 10s.—Craneage 32s. 4d. - - -	£2	2	4
Town Dues on £7000. at 2d. in the pound on two-thirds thereof, cash value - - -	38	17	9
Wharfage 4d. per package. - - - -	1	12	4
	£42	12	5

" Account of Local Charges on an actual Shipment of 97 Packages of Manchester Goods shipped at Liverpool for the United States, value £7,436. 4s. 5d.

Export Duty the same as at other Ports.

Entries, Shipping, Dock and Town Dues - -	£3	3	2
Difference in favour of Liverpool -	£39	9	3

" The above charges at Liverpool are taken from an actual transaction or shipment made from that port on account of myself and partner.

" The Bristol charges are taken from the experience of nearly a similar shipment from thence. The Town dues being on the value, and Wharfage per package; the calculation for Bristol has been made to exhibit what the shipment which was made from Liverpool would have incurred if it had been made from Bristol, for account of a person not free of the city.

(Signed)

* * * * * * *

"Bristol, 5th November, 1823."

" Statement of Local Charges in London, on 19 Bales of Silk weighing 2,979lbs. value of £4,468. 10s. 0d.

Landing, Wharfage, and Loading - -	£1	5	4
Scavage one-third of a penny per pound - -	4	2	9
	£5	8	1

" The Local Charges on the same in Bristol would be for a Person not free

Dock Dues on 2979lbs. at 3s. per £100.		£4	9	4		
Wharfage at 3d. per bale - -		0	4	9		
Town Dues on £4468. 10s. at 2d. on two-thirds - - - -		24	16	6		
Loading 1d. 1s. 7d.—Craneage 4s. 9d.		0	6	4		
					29	16	11
Difference in favour in London - -					£24	8	10

(Signed)

* * * * * *

" 5th November, 1823."

Local Charges on 300 Bales of Clover Seed, 590 cwt.

At Hull—Landing, Wharfage, and Housing at 3s. 4d. per ton - - - -					£4	18	4
At London—Landing, Wharfage, and Housing at 6d. per bag - - - -					7	10	0
At Bristol—Dock Dues - -	£7	7	6				
Wharfage 8d. per ton -	0	19	8				
Landing 1d. per bale -	1	5	0				
Town Dues on £1180. -	6	11	0				
				16	3	4	

(Signed)

* * * * * *

" 5th November 1823."

" Amount of Local Charges on 61 tons 9 cwt. Flax at Hull, taken from an actual A. S. of a parcel in which the undersigned was concerned.

Corporation Dues 8d. per ton - - -	£2	1	0	
Dock Landing 1s. per ton - - - -	3	1	5	
Weighing 10d. per ton - - - -	2	11	2	
Wharfage 1s. per ton - - - -	3	1	5	
	£10	15	0	

" The Charges on same at Bristol for a Person not free of the city, would have been (as experienced with other parcels),

Wharfage 10d. per ton - - -	£2	11	2			
Dock Dues 5s. per ton - - -	15	7	3			
Craneage 1s. 3d. per ton - - -	3	16	9			
Town Dues on £4300 - - -	23	17	10			
				45	13	0
Difference - - -				£32	2	0

Or more than three times the whole amount of Local Charges at Hull.

(Signed)

* * * * * *

" Bristol, 5th Nov. 1823."

" Account of Local Charges on the importation into Bristol of 56 Tons of Galipoli Oil at the King's beam, at the time when Oil was worth £70. per merchant's ton, on account of a Person not free of the city.

Wharfage at 8d. per ton		£1	17 4
Craneage at 1s. per ditto		2	16 0
Dock Dues 3s. per ditto		8	8 0
Town Dues on the valuation of £54. per Ton in Bond, on £3024, at 2d. in the pound, on two-thirds		16	16 0
		£29	17 4

" N. B. The Duty and other Charges which are the same in other ports are omitted.

" Account of Local Charges incurred at Hull, on an actual Importation of 56 Tons of Galipoli Oil, for account of myself and partner.

Landing 1s. per ton	£2 16 0		
Wharfage 1s. ditto	2 16 0		
		5	12 0
Difference in favour of Hull		£24	5 4

(Signed)

* * * * * *

" 20th November, 1823."

" Comparative Statement of Port Charges at Bristol and Liverpool, on an American vessel of 292 Tons Measurement.

Bristol Dock Dues, at 3s. per ton		£43	16 0
Anchorage		0	5 0
Moorage 1d. ditto		1	4 4
Mayor's Dues and Quay Warden		2	6 0
Pilotage inwards		15	9 6
Ditto outwards		10	17 9
		£73	18 7
Liverpool Dock Dues, at 2s. 3d. per ton	32 17 0		
Anchorage	0 1 6		
Trade Duty	0 5 0		
Pilotage inwards	10 15 0		
Ditto outwards	3 15 0		
		47	13 6
Difference		£26	5 1

(Signed)

* * * * * *

" November 20th, 1823."

(Copy) *Letter E.*

"TOWN DUES

In London on 2 bales, value £642.	Dock Charges, &c.	£0	3	2
Liverpool on 2 ditto — £642.	Town Dues	-	0	0	8
	Dock ditto	-	0	0	6
Bristol on 2 ditto — £642.	Town Dues	-	3	11	4

"During the short interval of peace in 1802, * * * informed the (then) Collector of Town dues, Charles Harford, Esq. that he could induce Shippers of Bale goods to send them through Bristol instead of London or Liverpool, if the Town dues of this port were reduced. Mr. Harford asked him what rate per bale would be an inducement? He replied he thought an average rate of 2s. 6d. per bale would be *then* cheerfully paid; he requested time to consider of it, and afterwards agreed to take 2s. 6d. per bale. * * * shipped 230 bales during the eleven months as under:

"1802.—February.—Per Ceres	-	for Leghorn	- 3	bales.
	Friendship	Naples & do.	60	ditto.
March - -	Brothers -	Leghorn	- 10	ditto.
July - -	Charlotte -	Cadiz	- - 2	ditto.
	Bristol -	Lisbon	- - 5	ditto.
	Hope -	New York	- 5	ditto.
September -	Fortune -	Lisbon	- - 5	ditto.
	Alexander	Leghorn	- 42	ditto.
October - -	Caledonia	Lisbon	- - 1	ditto.
	Nancy -	ditto	- - 12	ditto.
November -	Cameleon	Madeira	- 2	ditto.
	Bristol -	Lisbon	- 6	ditto.
December -	Penelope -	Leghorn	- 77	ditto.
		Total	- 230	bales.

"The whole Dues on which were clear gain to the city of Bristol, the ships were accommodated with light freight, so much needed, and the number of bales might be expected to have increased annually to the present time.

"The war breaking out the following year, and a convoy duty being laid on, the value of each bale was declared at the Custom-house, when Mr. Harford said in the face of the value, he must enforce the two-thirds *ad valorem* Town Duty, since which time only a few casual bales are shipped here when a vessel is on the point of sailing, or other favourable circumstances occur. The reasons will evidently appear from the following documents:

	In Bristol.	Liverpool.	London.
1810.—A.* Edward, for New York,			
9 bales—Town Dues	£16 13 4	...0 3 0	...0 15 0
Freight about ...	8 0 0		
1810.—B. Martha Brae, for Jamaica,			
3 bales—Town Dues	3 17 8	..0 1 0	...0 5 0
Freight	4 17 6		
1815.—C. Correrio de Fayal, for Lisbon,			
2 bales—Town Dues	2 2 8	...0 0 8	...0 3 2
Freight	1 13 0		
Duty	1 18 0		

* The above Letters refer to Invoices delivered in with the above Statement.

"By the Edward, the Town Dues are about double the freight to America; by the Martha Brae, they are within about £1 of the freight to Jamaica, and by the Correrio, they exceed the freight to Lisbon, and are greater than the King's Duty!!! whereas in Liverpool or London they would be scarcely felt; a difference of expence ruinous in its consequences to the trade of this port, and which must be removed before its proper station can be regained, as it bears directly or indirectly on so many branches of Commerce, particularly on shipping, light freight being so scarce in Bristol, that the owners cannot afford to take heavy cargoes from hence, even at double the freight paid from London and Liverpool, where light goods are plenty; and which would be the case here, if our local taxation were assimilated to that of other ports. The clothiers in Wiltshire sending their cloths through Bristol to Liverpool every month in the year, to be shipped to America, as well as those of Gloucestershire, a moderate rate of Town Dues on which would in course of time, produce a large revenue."

(Signed) * * * * * *

(Copy) *Letter* F.

"Sir, "*Wotton-underedge, 9th July*, 1823.

"I have seen some of the Shippers of Goods resident in this neighbourhood, and made the inquiry suggested in your last as to the reasons which influence them to prefer the ports of Liverpool and London to that of Bristol, and they state them to be threefold. 1st, The heavy local dues, which more than counterbalance the difference of carriage to Liverpool. 2dly, The uncertainty of the departure of ships from Bristol, as opposed to the regularity of time with which vessels leave Liverpool; and 3dly, the tediousness with which (whenever they have used the port of Bristol) the voyage has been performed. I will see more of the Gentlemen in correspondence with America, and do what I can to influence them to give Bristol another trial, and shall be glad to attend to your suggestions in furtherance of your wishes with regard to the successful efforts of the Chamber of Commerce.

"And am, Sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

(Signed) * * * * * *

To * * * * * *

(Copy)

"Dear Sir, "*Kidderminster, November 18th*, 1823.

"I have inquired into the reasons for the preference given to the port of Liverpool before that of Bristol, and find though the inland carriage, &c. to Liverpool is very much more expensive than that to Bristol, yet that the City Dues of the latter place more than balances that disadvantage, added to which they complain of the uncertainty of having their goods forwarded from Bristol; whereas from Liverpool they are never disappointed. I told them of the new vessels you mention, but they

did not seem at all inclined to attend to it; indeed, it seems the respective advantages of the two places will not admit of comparison, though Bristol is the nearer.

"Any thing further that I can do for you I shall feel most happy, on hearing from you, to attend to.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Your's faithfully,

(Signed) * * * * * * *

To * * * * * *

(Copy) *Letter* G.

"Sir, "*Bristol, October* 14*th*, 1823.

"Connected with the subject of local taxation, which I understand the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce have now under consideration, I beg leave to state the following fact, which, if you think relevant, you will perhaps communicate to the Board.

"The late George Austin, Esq. of Wotton, who was a considerable shipper of cloths to Ireland, finding the town dues so very heavy on his shipments, was induced for that reason alone to purchase the freedom of our city, and actually took a counting-house at one of the Tontine Warehouses, in order to be exempted from that imposition.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

* * * * * * *

To * * * * * *

(Copy) *Letter* H.

"Gentlemen, "*Bristol, November* 11*th*, 1823.

"We the undersigned merchants, and others engaged in the timber trade of Bristol, understanding that the subject of the local taxation of the port has been brought under the consideration of your Board, beg leave respectfully to state such of those taxes as in our opinion bear most heavy on that trade, and unless they are considerably modified and reduced, will eventually drive a large proportion of it from this port. Indeed we have already witnessed that they have had that effect to a very considerable extent.

"Bristol, it is well known, has been the principal port of importation in the channel for foreign timber, deals, &c. and it has hitherto supplied the neighbouring country with those commodities; but we have observed that other ports in the channel possess such a decided preference as it regards their local charges, when compared with those of Bristol, that the supplying the country adjacent to the Severn, and the extensive inland navigation connected with it, will ultimately be lost to this port.

"The charges we allude to as bearing so grievously heavy on our trade (and indeed on every branch of foreign commerce to this port), are the enormous town dues, wharfage, pilotage up and down the river, Mayor's dues, and the anchorage and moorage. In order to exemplify the great disadvantage under which

we labour, we beg leave to lay before you a statement of the comparative charges on a ship of 350 tons register, at this port and at Chepstow, supposing her to bring an average cargo of 500 loads of timber, King's Caliper measure.

The Port Charges at Bristol would not be less than as follows, viz.—				*At Chepstow they would be*—			
Pilotage up and down, say	£40	0	0	Pilotage up and down (supposing the ship to take a Bristol Channel Pilot, which she is not compelled to do, otherwise it would be but £2. 2s.)	£14	14	0
Dock Dues on Ship - -	35	0	0				
Ditto on Cargo - - -	16	13	4				
Town Dues - - - - -	11	2	0				
Wharfage - - - - - -	5	0	0				
Anchorage and Moorage	1	14	2	Anchorage - - - -	0	2	6
Mayor's and Quay Warden's Fees - - - -	2	5	0				
	£111	14	6		£14	16	6

making a difference of £96. 18*s.* in favor of Chepstow ! ! !

" With respect to the Channel Pilotage, we are not of opinion that the branch pilots receive too large a remuneration for their services, when we consider the distance they go to meet and take charge of ships bound to this Port, but the great expence incurred in bringing a vessel to and from Kingroad and the Floating Harbour of Bristol, we believe is not equalled at any other port in the kingdom. Sufficient horses are frequently employed from the Mouth of the River to the Dock Gates, to render it quite unnecessary that so many as 30, 40, and frequently 50 men and boys of the most indolent character, with four or five boats, should be added to the expence; the greater part of them in most cases rendering the ship no service whatever, indeed many of them being very old men and boys, they are incapable of doing the duty of able men, if required. We trust, however, now that steam-boats are introduced into this Port, that, following the example of Liverpool, Newcastle, &c. they will be employed in towing ships up and down this River, whereby the heavy charge for horses, men and boats, will be much diminished.

" The Town Dues that are exacted at this Port must certainly be ranked among the most oppressive of its charges, and were they very considerably reduced, we are inclined to believe that the proportionable increase, particularly in our export trade, added to the general advantages that would be derived therefrom by a greatly extended commerce, would be considered by all public spirited men as an ample compensation.

" The charge for Dock Dues is one that bears particularly heavy on the trade of Bristol ; whether equal advantages might not have been afforded to the Port at much less expence we will not pretend to say, but when we consider the great facilities and safety which our Docks afford to shipping, coupled with the very inadequate remuneration that the liberal undertakers of this great work receive, we are constrained to admit that this charge ought to be cheerfully borne.

"The Wharfage is a charge that bears particularly hard upon our trade, and that without the least semblance of equitable demand, for we are not permitted to use or derive any benefit from the quays, to the support of which we are such large contributors, being compelled to land our timber at our own private wharfs, except a small proportion, which is landed on the Society of Merchants' ground, and for which a distinct and separate charge is made.

"We consider that the charges for Anchorage and Moorage, and Mayor's Dues, are unnecessarily high, and part of those which are calculated to render this port most objectionable to strangers and foreign trade in general.

"Some of the consequences of the heavy charges we have alluded to, are a great reluctance on the part of ship-owners to charter their vessels for Bristol, and which are only obtained by paying them a considerably higher rate of freight than to any other ports in the channel, owing to which many of the minor ports, which were formerly supplied from hence, now import from the Baltic and America direct; and the high freight and charges consequently increasing the first cost, occasion an introduction of foreign timber and deals coastways by strangers, to evade them, and a great proportion of the inland towns which were supplied from Bristol, now receive such supplies from London, Liverpool, and Hull, by inland navigation.

"We would beg leave most respectfully to urge the necessity, that your Board should use every exertion and influence in its power to redress the grievance of which we complain, in order that the city of Bristol may be placed on a footing to avail herself of the great natural advantages with which she is blessed, and that she may be enabled, by the spirit and enterprise of her Citizens and Merchants, again to place herself in that respectable situation among commercial towns, from which we consider the evils we have complained of have mainly contributed to remove her.

"In conclusion, permit us to assure you how highly we appreciate the laudable service in which you are engaged, and that your exertions for the public good may be crowned with full success, is the sincere wish of

"Gentlemen,

"Your very obedient servants,

(Signed)

"William Scott	Thomas Wright
Thos. Rouch & Son	G. and S. Lunell
Wason and Hood	Igna. Davis
John Howell	Clark, Gilmore & Clark
William Sheppard	W. D. & W. E. Acraman
Alfred George	William Chubb
L. & A. Cambridge	Thomas Thorne
Francis K. Barnes	W. H. Marshall
A. S. Corrick & Co.	George Fisher and Sons
William Cross	Stephen Prust."
Acraman and Jones	

" *Bristol*, 11*th Oct.* 1823.

" *Messrs.* * * * * * *

" Gentlemen,

" Since I communicated to you some of the particulars of my late voyage to the East-Indies, I have taken the subject of another voyage to that country, under consideration; and from the many advantages to be gained by the agency of an English house, and the employment of English ships for the importation of such goods as are called for by us, I intend to consult my friends on my arrival in Philadelphia, and endeavour to commence a voyage from your country. Many articles suitable for the outward cargo may be conveniently had at Bristol, particularly small-sized English Iron, but I find that your Town Dues and other charges at this port, as well as the transhipment of the return cargo from Calcutta, are much higher here than at London or Liverpool. Under these circumstances, I cannot recommend the undertaking from this port while Liverpool offers advantages over you.

" The rate of freight in your vessels, the advantage of 8 to 10 per cent. on the export duty on goods, and the gain on bills on England for the investment, will, I apprehend, induce my friends to supply themselves with East-India productions in this way, in preference to the usual mode of shipping Spanish dollars from the United States in American vessels. When I was in London a few weeks since, I found that I could supply myself with many articles even lower than I could buy them in India. When I return home I shall make this fact known, and I am fearful that we shall be obliged to abandon our *direct* trade to Calcutta, Madras, &c.

" If your port could offer equal advantages with Liverpool or London, I have little doubt that I could influence my friends to join me, to avail of your good services to carry the voyage into operation.

" If I am in error in regard to your Port Charges and Town Dues, I shall be glad to be set right. Wishing to hear from you at your earliest convenience,

" I remain with true regard,

" Your friend,

(Signed) * * * * *

(Copy) *Letter* K.

" *To the Committee of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce.*

" Gentlemen,

" As a member of your Chamber, I beg to call your attention to the disadvantages under which the Hosiery Trade of this city labours, in the shipment of goods from the port of Bristol, as contrasted with the ports of Liverpool and London.

" In the port of Bristol there is an *ad valorem* charge called Town Dues, of 2d. in the pound upon two-thirds of the value of the shipment; a Wharfage of 2d. per truss, and a Cranage of 1½d. per ditto.

" In Liverpool the charges are, 2d. per package, town dues; and 5d per ditto, dock dues.

" In London the charges are, dock fees 9d. per package.

"This difference makes against us in two ways,—first, as a hindrance to resident hosiers making shipments from this port; and secondly, as preventing foreigners from coming to us, owing to the difficulty of procuring back freight. Now as hosiery forms excellent packages of dry goods, and is therefore well adapted for return freight, there seems great reason to expect, that if by your exertions our municipal authorities can be induced to lower our port charges to a level with other places, we may be enabled to take that share in the foreign trade of the kingdom, to which from our natural advantages we are fairly entitled.

"I would also beg to remark, that nearly the whole of the stockings consumed in the United States, are now shipped from the port of London, which from the enterprize and the capital of our merchants might certainly be shared by us, who are equally well situated as regards the seat of manufacture.

"I beg to subscribe myself,

"Gentlemen,

"Your obedient servant,

(Signed) * * * * * *

"*Bristol, November* 22, 1823."

"To illustrate the annexed, I beg to shew the comparative charges on 10 Trusses of Hosiery, value £600. (say £60. each Truss) in the three ports referred to.

Port of Bristol—*ad valorem* Duty on two-thirds of the value, at 2d. per £, on £400 - -	£3	6	8
2d. per Truss on 10 Trusses, Wharfage is -	0	1	8
1½d. ditto ditto Craneage is - -	0	1	3
	£3	9	7
Port of Liverpool—Town Dues 2d. per Truss on 10 Trusses - - - - - -	0	1	8
Dock Dues 5d. per Truss on 10 Trusses - -	0	4	2
	£0	5	10
Port of London—Dock Dues 9d. per Truss on 10 Trusses - - - - - -	£0	7	6

"Add to the above the following fact, communicated to me by an importer of French Kid Skins, at Worcester, who shewed me his Bill of Charges.

Charges in London on 1344 Kid Skins imported from Bourdeaux - - - -	£0	8	9
Charges in Bristol on about half the number -	£0	19	11

"With such statements as these before us, can we wonder at the decay of trade in Bristol.

(Signed)

* * * * * *

(Copy) *Letter* L.

" *To the Committee of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce for Local Taxation.*

" We beg leave to inform you, we have bought two parcels of foreign iron, just imported, the one to London, the other to Bristol, at one and the same price. We propose to send both to the Mediterreanean; that in London we can export at a freight not exceeding 10s. per ton; but for the one in Bristol, 30s. per ton is demanded, or three times the freight paid from London.

" This great difference arises from the want of bale or other light goods to accompany the iron from Bristol. Besides this extra freight, if the iron were exported by a non-freeman, he would have to pay town dues in addition.

" The Committee will perceive that while such disadvantages exist here in comparison with other ports, the import and export trade of Bristol can never be in a prosperous state; on the contrary, the present limited extent of it is in danger of being still further restricted.

* * * * * *

" *Bristol, 22d November* 1823."

(Copy) *Letter* M.

" *To the Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce.*

" Gentlemen,

" Understanding that the high Local Charges of this Port are now under your consideration, we hand you annexed two statements of the Town Dues and Dock Dues, which are levied on African goods at this Port, in comparison with those which are levied at Liverpool.

" We think these statements will sufficiently explain the reason why the African trade, which was once carried on here to a great extent, is now nearly all gone; with such oppressive dues, it is rather surprising that any should remain.

" We earnestly hope you will be enabled to obtain a great reduction of the Town and Dock Dues on these African goods, which we are assured will be of great benefit to the trade of this Port, as well as to

" Your obedient servants,

" *Bristol, 27th November* 1823." * * * * * *

TOWN DUES.

	Bristol. Inwards or Outwards. Value per Ton.	At per Ton.	Liverpool. Inwards. Per Ton.	Outwards. Per Ton.
Elephant's Teeth	£300	£1 13 4	£0 1 0	£0 0 6
Palm Oil	24	0 2 8	not rated but certainly not more than Ivory	
Camwood	18	0 2 0	0 0 6	0 0 3
Redwood	6	0 0 8	0 0 6	0 0 3
Ebony	12	0 1 4	0 0 6	0 0 3
Gum Copal	168	0 18 8	not rated.	
Gum Senegal	120	0 13 4	0 1 0	0 0 6
Guinea Grains	60	0 6 8	rated by package about	
Guinea Pepper	60	0 6 8	per Ton	
Beeswax	120	0 13 4	0 1 0	0 0 6

" All these articles are at present extremely low, some of them have been four times as high, and most of them twice as high within the last 10 years, and it is probable that many of them will be so again; in that case, the Bristol Town Dues would be increased in proportion, whilst those of Liverpool would remain the same.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Board of Directors

TO

A GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 26th day of January, 1824,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOM, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL STREET.

1824.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT, &c. &c.

THE Board of Directors, in meeting the Members of the Chamber, beg leave to present a Report of their proceedings from the time of their election to the present period.

The conviction of the importance of the trust reposed in them, and the desire of retaining the good opinion of their Fellow Citizens, have produced in your Board a zealous attention to the several subjects, which have come under their consideration; and they trust, it will be found, that they have not been negligent in the performance of the duties imposed on them.

The citizens of Bristol have long experienced the want of an efficient organ, by which to communicate their sentiments or represent their grievances to the public authorities.

A Representative Association like the present, combining within itself individuals connected with every branch of trade, has in other places been found by experience to be the best calculated effectually to supply this deficiency; and it is hoped that an era has now arrived, when Bristol will rouse from her slumber, and energetically call upon her sons to assert their just claims; to assume an attitude, not of defiance,

but of manly and rational independence; to unite in the cause of liberal principles and pursuits, and to share in the labour and in the reward of firm and honourable exertions.

Upon the formation of the Board, the Directors lost no time in applying themselves to the objects of their appointment.

Numerous subjects have successively occupied their attention, all of them, though differing in their degree of importance, were closely connected, either with the general interests of trade and commerce, or with the more immediate and local concerns of Bristol; one of the earliest of which, was the formation of a Code of Bye Laws for the regulation of their future proceedings.

Committees have been appointed to investigate and to watch such Parliamentary measures as appeared to relate to general commerce, or to the particular interests of Bristol; and the Board have the satisfaction to believe, that in several cases their interference has proved beneficial.

The first Legislative measure brought under the notice of your Board was Mr. Wallace's Warehousing Bill, several clauses of which being considered objectionable, your Board solicited the co-operation of the Municipal Corporation, and of the Society of Merchants, who with the Board, severally called the attention of our Representatives in Parliament to the subject; and the Board have the pleasure to state, that from the united exertions of this and other ports of the kingdom, many of the objectionable clauses were either modified or withdrawn.

It having been represented to your Board that the conveyance of the Mails from this port

to the South of Ireland by Steam Packets was practicable, and would be highly advantageous to this city, a correspondence on the subject was entered into with the Post-Office department, but your Board have to regret that a different route had been previously determined on.

The great utility of Commercial Associations like the present is exemplified in the case of the new Ships' Registry Bill, several objectionable clauses of which (through the representations of this and other similar institutions) were removed or modified, so as to meet the wishes of all parties interested in the measure.

The state of the Laws relating to Merchant and Factor having been brought under the notice of your Board, the subject received the consideration which its importance deserved, and petitions on the subject, from the Board, as well as from many other Commercial Bodies, were presented to the Legislature. The result was, that an important and satisfactory alteration was made therein.

To enable the Board to comply with the directions of the Chamber relative to arbitrations, they have, after much deliberation, and carefully weighing all the bearings of the case, drawn up a plan, which they consider best calculated to meet the views of the Chamber, and it is now submitted to them for their approbation, previously to its being embodied in their laws.

The Accounts for the year ending the 31st of December 1823, having been passed by the Auditors, are now laid upon the table for inspection; on a perusal of them it will be seen, that the Annual Subscriptions amount to £213. 3s. Interest on Exchequer Bills, £12. 4s.

making the total income £225. 7s. exclusive of £426. 6s. Entrance Money, of which £419. 4s. 8d. have been invested in Exchequer Bills, according to rule.—The Expenditure to the same day was £319. 7s. 8d. leaving a balance due to the Treasurers of £86. 19s. 4d.

In laying these Accounts before the Chamber, the Board would remark, that though many expences incident to the formation of such an Institution, have been incurred, to which it will not again be liable, yet, as every contingency cannot be foreseen, it is impossible to state with accuracy what may be the future expenditure. The Board, therefore, feel confident that the utility of the Institution will be so appreciated by their Fellow Citizens, that there will be no deficiency in the means for rendering their operations effectual.

The subject of greatest interest and importance which has come under the notice of the Board is the LOCAL TAXATION of the Port. On this subject the Board have fully reported to the Chamber at their Meeting on the 2d inst.; since which the Board have been sedulously employed in carrying the Resolutions of the Chamber into effect. A printed copy of the said Report and Resolutions, together with the Documents annexed thereto, were sent on the 7th inst. to his Worship the Mayor, to the Society of Merchants, and to the Directors of the Bristol Dock Company.

The following Memorials* to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Board of Trade were prepared, and your Board deputed four of its members, accompanied by the Secretary, to proceed to London, to present the same, with

* The Memorials were copies of each other, with the variation in the titles of address.

a Case containing a more detailed statement of the burthens under which the Port is labouring:—

[COPY.]

"To the Right Honorable the PRESIDENT, and the BOARD of COUNCIL for TRADE and FOREIGN PLANTATIONS.

"The Memorial of the BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE TRADE and MANUFACTURES,

"SHEWETH,—That the City of Bristol is an ancient chartered City, governed by a Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, and that at no very distant period of its history it ranked as the Second Commercial Port in the kingdom.

"That neither during the late war, when this country possessed an unexampled monopoly of trade, nor since the extension of its trade consequent upon the peace of 1815, and the general advancement of the nation in commercial prosperity, has Bristol kept pace with other ports, or enjoyed a share of prosperity proportioned to its acknowledged local advantages, and the capital and industry of its Merchants, but has been in a state of comparative decline.

"That your Memorialists feel convinced, that these circumstances have principally arisen from oppressive Local Taxation, the branches of which most complained of are Town Dues, levied *ad valorem* on the Import and Export of Goods not the property of Freemen; and a Rate for Mayor's Dues on every Vessel of 60 tons and upwards, payable each time of entering the port.

"That these Dues are payable to the Mayor, Burgesses, and Commonalty of Bristol, and that the oppression and partiality of these exactions your Memorialists believe to be unparalleled.

"That your Memorialists feel convinced that not only the Interests of Bristol, but of the Trading and Manufacturing Districts in its Vicinity are affected by this injurious local taxation.

"That applications have been made at various times, by Individuals to the Common Council for relief, which have proved unavailing.

"That your Memorialists having lately been associated into a Chamber of Commerce, have entered upon an investigation of the subject, and found the injurious effects of this taxation to be more extensive than they expected.

"That for obtaining such relief in the Premises, as on investigation should appear practicable, your Memorialists have entered into a respectful correspondence with the Common Council of the City, (by whom exclusively the corporate funds are managed) but the same having proved unavailing, your Memorialists are under the necessity of petitioning the Legislature, for an investigation into the Local Taxation of Bristol, and for such relief in the Premises as the Legislature shall think it right to afford.

"That your Memorialists submit herewith to your Honorable Board, a Copy of their Correspondence with the Common Council, a Statement of further details of the Case of your Memorialists, and sundry Documents in support of their allegations; all of which they will be prepared to corroborate by *viva voce* evidence, when required, as well as by the Petitions of the Burgesses and Commonalty of Bristol, and other parties concerned.

"Your Memorialists, therefore, earnestly hope that the justice of their Case, and the advancement of the general interests of Trade, at all times so liberally promoted by your Honorable Board, will secure to them your countenance and support in the application proposed to be made by them to Parliament during the ensuing Session.

"And your Memorialists shall ever pray.

"Signed by order and on behalf of the Chamber.

(Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON,

"*Bristol, January 15th*, 1824." "VICE PRESIDENT.

CASE

Of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce,

ACCOMPANYING THE FOREGOING MEMORIAL.

"THE Corporation of Bristol has from very ancient times subsisted under the style of the "Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol," and by that name has at various periods obtained Charters and Grants from the Crown, and has become possessed of Houses, Lands, Church Livings, and other Property and Estates of very considerable value.

"The affairs of the said Corporation are wholly managed by the Mayor, two Sheriffs, twelve Aldermen, and twenty-eight Common Councilmen, who are self-elected; and the Body of Burgesses or Commonalty have no voice whatever either in the election of these Officers, or in the expenditure of the Corporate funds.

"Very considerable sums of money are allowed annually to the Mayor and Sheriffs, and other Officers and Servants of the Corporation; but of the amount or application of their Trust Property, no accounts whatever are rendered by the Common Council, although various attempts have at different times been made by the Burgesses to obtain inspection thereof.

"In addition to their other property, the Corporation (to extract the words of a Bill filed by them in the Exchequer many years ago, against a person, who disputed their title) "have been "for many years past, and now are, entitled to and have had, "received and taken, (over and besides certain Wharfage and "other duties demised for a term of years to the Corporate "Society of Merchant Venturers, in the said city of Bristol) a "certain Toll of 6d. per Hogshead for Tobacco and Sugar, "and 1s. by the Butt for Wine, and 2d. in the pound according "to the value, upon all other goods, wares and merchandizes, "being the property of persons not free of the said city of "Bristol, nor otherwise legally exempt from the payment of "such Duties, imported from or exported to foreign parts "beyond the seas."

"Which dues, commonly called *the Town Dues*, the Corporation claimed by the said Bill under a grant from King Henry 6th, (enlarged by subsequent grants from the Crown) of all Local Tolls, Customs, Fairs, Markets and Appurtenances.

"The Common Council also, under this or some other title, claim to receive as Mayor's Dues, forty shillings, with five shillings Water Bailiff's fee, for every Vessel of sixty tons and and upwards, each time of their entering the Port; and they claim two shillings and sixpence for every Vessel under that burthen.

"The Mayor's Dues, it is believed, have uniformly been paid after the above rate. The injurious operation of the Town Dues is of a comparatively modern date—in and before 1777, (about which time the above Bill in the Exchequer was filed)

by means of the collection being lax, it is supposed they produced but £500. 18s. 8d. but the amount enforced has gradually been increased, so that in 1810 they produced £4,578. 9s. 1d. and at the present time probably a much larger sum; from 12 to 15 per Cent. or upwards being paid to the Collector, as it is believed.

"The Mayor's Dues are considered to produce about £2000. per annum, subject to a per centage for collecting.

"Sugar, Wool and Tobacco, which were in 1777 (as the two former are now) the leading articles of trade in Bristol, and in which the chief Merchants in wealth and influence, as well within the Common Council as without were concerned, are substantially exempted from the Town Dues by the easy Package Rate (mentioned in the Bill) being substituted for the *ad valorem* duty. The Mayor's Dues in their operation have also a partial and oppressive effect. A Vessel of 60 Tons burthen, importing Iron from Newport, and which may make seventy voyages a year, and a freight of ten pounds; or a Steam Packet, making a daily passage, must pay on each voyage its forty-five shillings, whilst a West India ship of 500 Tons, making one voyage a year and £4000. freight, pays but the same. It is to be observed that the Common Council do not in general exact their Town Dues on more than two-thirds of the full value, or 11s. 1½d. per Cent.—2d. in the pound on the full value being 16s. 8d. per Cent. But the full amount is occasionally demanded.

"No printed rate whatever of the Town Dues exists, and the Collector takes the value from the declarations at the Custom-house, or the price current. The Declarations of Freemen are received, as to whether goods entered in their own name are on commission, or on their own account; whence a door is opened for fraud, by which the interests of the fair trader are further prejudiced. Ireland is considered a foreign country, and a distinct coastwise duty of small amount is taken from the greater part of English Ports.

"Neither for the Town Dues, or Mayor's Dues, is any service whatever rendered; they are paid solely for the privilege of using the Port of Bristol.

"It may be observed that Town Dues are received at London, Liverpool, Hull, and other Ports; not an *ad valorem* duty, but by package.

"The excessive amount, and the partiality of the Bristol Town Dues, and the assessment *ad valorem*, are, it is believed, without a parallel.

"Distinct charges under the heads of Anchorage, Moorage, Pilotage, Wharfage, Plankage and Craneage, are payable for these respective services; and the above, with the Dock Rates on Goods and Vessels, taken under recent Acts of Parliament, make up an amount of taxation on the trade of Bristol, the oppressiveness of which has become notorious at home and abroad.

"It is well known that Bristol, at no very distant period of its history, held the rank of second commercial port of the kingdom. It has now lost that station: within recent years Liverpool and Glasgow successively have left it behind; and the tributary Ports in its own Channel are daily gaining ground upon it. Allowing that circumstances and events, not to be remedied or controlled, may have produced some degree of this decline, the Chamber of Commerce, after much examination and attention to the subject, feel well convinced, that to the long and silent operation of its oppressive Local Taxation, the decline of the Port may principally be attributed.

"The precise effects, which might have been anticipated from a tax operating as the Town Dues, are strikingly apparent in the present state of the Trade of Bristol.

"Those branches, which have ever been the source and test of commercial prosperity, and which the Legislature has done so much to encourage, the *Carrying*, *Warehousing* and *Commission Trades* are greatly discouraged, and nearly excluded from the Port, by a transit duty of 11s. per Cent. incurred on Importation, and again on Exportation, if the property has been in the mean time changed. A general trade in commodities of small bulk and large value is prevented; and in short, the Commerce of the City is upheld principally by the demand of its own and surrounding population, and by the Imports of the Sugar, Wine and Wool, *the favored articles*. Nor is it to be doubted, that even these branches are suffering from the general depression, and the confined market, which the City consequently offers. The Town Dues exclude Woollen and other Bale Manufactures; the want of these curtails the Export of Iron; the defalcation of that part of trade affects a third, and that third

another, until even the favored branches must be suffering a degree of injury not to be compensated by the bonus afforded them by their exemption.

"Fixed Capital in Bristol vested in Docks, Sugar-houses, Glass-houses, Warehouses, Dwellings and other Buildings for mercantile uses and accommodation, is declining in value; and it is mainly owing to its being thus fixed, that the general trade which the Port still retains, is left. But few persons with disposable capital, or of enterprising talent, have in late years sought employment for it in Bristol. To sum up the whole,—langour and despondency, as to improvement, confirm every evil under which the commercial interests labor. Such is the state of Bristol;—a city possessing a noble harbour, and accommodation for extensive commerce, completed ten years since at an expence of £600,000,—the termination of the commodious inland navigation of the Kennet and Avon Canal, a work of still greater expence;—the focus of the populous and wealthy districts of Wilts, Gloucester, Somerset, Devon, Worcester, Warwick and Salop, of which it is the legitimate outport;—and having in its immediate vicinity, the Coal, Iron and Copper markets of Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire, the exports of which are capable of unlimited increase;—but the several products of these districts are unnaturally driven for the most part by expensive inland carriage to more distant and liberal Ports; and the result is, that without prompt interference, gradual declension and ultimate decay must be apprehended, for the very large amount of fixed capital which the city contains.

"The above named Counties are, by the same cause, deprived of the Port best accommodated for their use, which circumstance discourages their manufactures.

"The Town Dues may not produce more than 5 or £6000. per annum, but the Chamber of Commerce feel assured, that the Honorable Board of Trade will perceive, that they have not over-rated the effects produced by them. As long as other Ports are open, so long the tax will be avoided. The small amount collected is the best possible reason for the abolition of a taxation, which is ruinous without being productive; but it can be unproductive only, because the trade which it oppressed, is destroyed; and the Chamber having watched with the liveliest interest the liberal and enlightened views on the subject of

Trade, developed in recent Reports of Parliament, and realized by a judicious Government, they are led to hope, that the suffering interests not only of Bristol, but of the Counties before mentioned, comprehending a large portion of his Majesty's subjects, directly or indirectly connected with Bristol, or who might be so under a more favourable state of things, will be thought worthy the attention and interference of the Legislature, to which they purpose to appeal, and will secure to them the support of his Majesty's Government, as prayed for in their Memorial."

The above Documents were duly presented by the Deputation (in company with our Representatives in Parliament) to the Public Functionaries, to whom they were addressed. The Deputation were received with the greatest politeness, and their statements listened to with the most marked attention.

In this stage of the proceedings the Board conceive, that a detail of what passed between the Deputation and the Gentlemen to whom they were introduced, would be premature; and they would only observe, that the principal object of the mission in which they were engaged, viz. to procure interviews with these personages, and to lay before them a statement of their grievances, was most satisfactorily completed, and the whole of their proceedings will in due time be communicated to the Chamber at large.

The attention of our Representatives in Parliament to the Deputation, both in public and private, and the interest they took in the subject, were most gratifying, and well deserve the best thanks of this Chamber.

The Board would now call the attention of the Chamber to the following Resolutions entered into by the Common Council on the 17th inst. a copy of which was sent to the Board on the 20th :—

"At a Meeting of the COMMON COUNCIL held at the Council House, in the City of Bristol, on the 17th day of January, 1824.

"Mr. Mayor acquainted the Common Council, that the occasion of his calling them together at this time, was to lay before them a Letter from the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, dated the 18th of December last, also a Letter dated the 22nd of the same month, from Mr. Joseph Cookson, Vice President, and another Letter dated the 6th January inst. from Mr. Joseph Reynolds, President of the said Board, severally addressed to the Mayor, together with a printed Report of the Board of Directors to a Special Meeting of the Chamber, held the 2nd January inst. on the subject of Local Taxation, and the Resolutions of the Chamber thereon; and the said Letters, Report, and Resolutions having been read, and also two Letters addressed to the Solicitors, of which the following are copies, viz.

"'GENTLEMEN, "'*Bristol, 29th Dec.* 1823.

"'Your Letter containing a Copy of the Resolution of the Common Council, on the subject of the Memorial from the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, was submitted to the Board of Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, in November last, who thereupon gave directions for procuring official information respecting the state of the Trade and Commerce of Bristol, which they considered necessary to the elucidation of the important subject referred to in the Resolution of the Common Council.

"'As soon as the investigation instituted for this purpose is completed, the Board of Directors will have the honor to transmit to your Worshipful Corporation their sentiments thereon, to whom they are much obliged for the favor of the communication. (Signed)

"'HALL & OSBORNE,

"'*Messrs. Brice & Burges.*'" "'CLERKS.

"'GENTLEMEN, "'*Bristol, 6th Jan.* 1824.

"'I am directed by the Committee of the Society of Merchants to acquaint you for the information of the Common Council, that the important subject referred to in the Resolution of the

Common Council, transmitted in your letter of the 3rd Nov. last, has been for some time under their consideration, and that the Corporation shall be furnished with the result of their inquiries thereon, when completed. In the mean time the Society return their acknowledgments for the favor of the communication. (Signed)

" 'JER. OSBORNE.

" '*Messrs. Brice & Burges.*' "

" Mr. Mayor further acquainted the House, that the Memorials to the Board of Trade, and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, referred to in the third Resolution passed at the Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce on the 2nd inst. (Copies of which by such Resolution were directed to be transmitted to the Corporation) had not been received. And this House feeling the importance of having such Documents before them previously to proceeding to deliberate upon the Report, determined to suspend their proceedings until it could be ascertained whether such Memorials could be procured; and in consequence, directed that one of the Law Officers should immediately apply to the Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce for the same. And this House having waited, whilst their Officer made such application, were informed on his return, that the Secretary was in London, and not expected in Bristol for several days, and that no order had been left to transmit the Memorials to the Corporation.*

" Mr. Mayor then produced a Report from the Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, received this morning, in reply to the Resolution of the House on the first November last, which Report was also read.

" Whereupon, this House having referred to their Resolution of the 1st November, and to the Declaration made by the Chamber of Commerce in their Memorial of the 27th of Sept. last, that they have always been accustomed to look up with deference and respect to this Corporation, and to consider them as the natural Guardians of their rights and priviledges, and have never entertained the slightest inclination to interfere with the jurisdiction or priviledges of this Body, but that on the

* This circumstance is explained in the Board's reply.

contrary, they are solely actuated by an anxiety for the commercial welfare of the City, and that they would most seriously deplore the want of co-operation on the part of this Corporation in the attempts which they are making for the improvement of the trade of the Port;—*Resolved unanimously*, That this House cannot help expressing surprise and regret, that, after such declaration, the Chamber of Commerce should have been the medium of communicating to this Corporation, and giving publicity, without observation, to the offensive expressions contained in Letter C of the Appendix of Documents; being a Letter addressed to the Local Taxation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and concluding as follows:

"'When too late, we shall have to lament the day when Bristol received her Municipal Charters, which though given to protect our once highly favored City, have, through mismanagement, been perverted to her degradation.'*

"*Resolved unanimously*, That after the anxious desire expressed by this Corporation, in their Resolution of the 1st of November last, to promote the commercial and general prosperity of the City; and pending their proceedings for the purpose of procuring the information suggested in that Resolution, and in the absence of the Memorials referred to in the third Resolution of the Chamber of Commerce, it is the opinion of this Corporation, that the measures adopted by the Chamber of Commerce are hasty and premature, and that their proceedings cannot but be considered hostile to the rights and property of this Corporation, and have a tendency to preclude any voluntary concession which this Corporation might have been otherwise disposed to make. Nevertheless, so desirous is this Corporation not only to use every exertion to benefit the City, of which they are the constituted Guardians, by affording relief, when convinced that a necessity exists for doing so, but also to save the useless expenditure of public money in litigation;

* The Board think it expedient for the due understanding of the right bearing of this quotation, to print the paragraph entire:—

"You will therefore permit us to conclude by observing, that without some speedy and effectual interference, we foresee that our Port must shortly sink into a state of comparative insignificance, and then, when too late, we shall have to lament the day when Bristol received her municipal charters, which, though given to protect our once highly favoured city, have, through mismanagement been perverted to her degradation."

" *Resolved unanimously*, That if the respective Bodies, who have been referred to and invited to join in the consideration of this subject, shall concur in opinion that the Town Dues and Port Charges, as they are at present collected, do seriously depress and injure the Trade of this Port, and if such Bodies should manifest an inclination to co-operate with this Corporation in their revisal,

" That then this Corporation will most readily promote such legal measures as may be necesary to modify and reduce such Town Dues and Port Charges, so that they shall in no case amount to more on any specific article than the sum now collected.

" That this Corporation, in thus delaring their sentiments, have endeavoured, by temperance and forbearance, to evince to the Chamber of Commerce, and to their Fellow Citizens at large, that their sole object has been, and ever will be, the promotion not only of the trading and commercial, but of the general interests and benefit of this City, and duly to administer those funds intrusted to their care. But that if after this avowal of the intention of the Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce should still, in the absence of that information which has been so anxiously sought, and which would so materially weigh in the ultimate determination of this Corporation, persist in the adoption of measures which cannot but be deemed adverse, this Corporation will have no alternative but to support, by all lawful means, those rights and priviledges, coeval with the Port, and which have been held by this Corporation, for many centuries, under a legal and indisputable title.

" Ordered, that Copies of the aforegoing Resolutions be transmitted to the Society of Merchant Adventurers, the Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce.

In reference to the subject of transmitting the Memorial to the Mayor, as directed by the 3d Resolution of the Chamber, it may be sufficient for the Board to state, that the Memorial was presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Saturday the 17th inst. and on Monday the

19th copies of the same, and of the detailed Case, were forwarded to the Mayor, so that his Worship was in possession of copies of these Documents at the earliest hour at which they could be forwarded.

The Board will not take up the time of the Chamber with any further remarks on the Resolutions of the Common Council, as the following Memorial sent to that body will fully explain the sentiments of the Board upon them:

"To the Right Worshipful the MAYOR, the Worshipful the ALDERMEN, and the COMMON COUNCIL of the CITY of BRISTOL, in Common Council assembled.

"The Memorial of the BOARD of DIRECTORS of the BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE, TRADE, and MANUFACTURES,

"SHEWETH—That your Memorialists have had the honour to receive a Copy of the Resolutions of the Common Council passed on the 17th instant, and are concerned to observe, that the proceedings of the Chamber of Commerce are therein considered as having been hasty and premature, and hostile to the rights and property of the Corporation.—But your Memorialists feel well assured, that upon a due consideration of the exigency imposed upon the Chamber as explained in their Report and Resolutions of the 2nd January, and of the anxious hope and desire manifested therein for the co-operation of the Common Council *(see third Resolution)*, your Memorialists must be acquitted of the imputations which the Resolutions of the Common Council appear to convey.

"Nor can your Memorialists admit themselves to be accountable for an incidental expression, which has been construed as offensive by the Corporation, used in a Representation made to your Memorialists by respectable parties, suffering under the pressure of the grievances complained of; which representations they considered it their duty to lay before your Worshipful Body in the form in which they were received.

"But your Memorialists confidently trust, that neither by such an expression, nor by any omissions on the part of your

Memorialists, nor by any opinions to be expressed by other public Bodies of the City,—the Common Council will be induced to delay, or be prevented, from adopting such measures as shall appear to be requisite and best adapted for securing the welfare and prosperity of the community placed under their protection.

" Your Memorialists, in pursuance of the Resolutions of the Chamber before referred to, have presented to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade, the Memorials and Statement of their case, copies of which were immediately after presentation forwarded to your Worshipful Body; and each of those Right Honourable Gentlemen having condescendingly received the complaints of your Memorialists, and expressed to the Representatives for the City their readiness to receive the Common Council, and to hear their statements, with a view to an arrangement being devised, by which the great Commercial Interests of the Port may be reconciled with the rights of your Worshipful Body;—

Your Memorialists beg leave to repeat their anxious wish to co-operate with your Worshipful Body in effecting this most desirable arrangement; and they respectfully suggest, that this opportunity of submitting their respective cases to his Majesty's Government, affords the most unobjectionable method for removing the grievances complained of, with a due regard to the rights and dignity of the Corporation.

" Your Memorialists therefore, relying on the desire expressed by your Body for the commercial and general prosperity of the City, confidently anticipate the assent of your Worshipful Body to the equitable mode of arrangement which has been suggested.

" And your Memorialists will ever pray.

" Signed by order and on behalf of the Board.

" THOMAS STOCK,

" *Dated Jan. 24th*, 1824." " VICE PRESIDENT.

The Subscriptions entered into at the last Meeting of the Chamber for the purpose of carrying their views into effect, now amount nearly to £1300.

The Board hope, that the opportunity given by the present numerous meeting will be embraced by the Members of the Chamber, who have not yet contributed to the fund.

The Board would here impress on the Chamber and their Fellow Citizens generally, the importance of having such a fund at their disposal, as will be sufficient to meet all possible emergencies, that may arise from the prosecution of the measures in which the Chamber are now engaged, or any others which the Chamber or its Directors, in their judgment and discretion, may determine to adopt.

The Board beg to conclude their Report with expressing their ardent hope that the issue of the negociation with the Common Council will prove favourable alike to the immediate object of the Chamber, to the general interests and satisfaction of their Fellow Citizens, and of that Body, who are legally constituted the guardians of their rights and their prosperity.

Dr. { *Messrs. Cave, Ames, & Cave, Treasurers, in Account Current with the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, for the Year ending the 1st of January, 1824.* } Contra Cr.

	£.	s.	d.
To amount of Entrance Money received from 203 Members, at two Guineas each	426	6	0
To Amount of Annual Subscriptions received from the said 203 Members, at one Guinea each	213	3	0
To Interest received on three Exchequer Bills	12	4	0
To Balance due to the Treasurers	86	19	4
	£738	12	4

Audited and Examined,
Bristol, 19th Jan. 1824,

EDWARD DALTON.
W. S. JACQUES.
EDWARD SLADE.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
By Payments made as under, viz.						
John Willis, for Office Furniture	28	17	0			
	0	9	6			
For Parliamentary Votes & Proceedings, ℔ J. R. Hall	15	15	0			
Petty Disbursements, as ℔ the Secretary's Accounts of particulars exhibited, viz.	7	6	8			
	6	3	10			
	3	8	4			
	16	18	10			
Messrs. Butterworth, for Maps	5	14	0			
Rent of the Committee-Room, to the 21st December	13	13	0			
Advertising in the following Newspapers, viz. Mercury	£6	7	0			
Gazette	5	18	0			
Observer	6	2	0			
Journal	6	6	0			
Mirror	6	5	6			
	30	18	6			
Bristol Acts, and Parliamentary Reports on Trade, ℔ J. R. Hall	7	18	0			
Fire and Lights	3	3	0			
Parsons & Browne, for Stationery	8	5	8			
Wm. Stock, for Carpenter's Work	13	0	3			
John Norton, for Stationery	3	11	2			
Wm. Richardson, for Books	5	11	0			
J. W. Turpin & Co. for Bookbinding	3	10	1			
J. M. Gutch, for Printing	43	9	6			
J. Thorne, for Tin Ware	3	0	0			
Collecting the Subscriptions	10	10	0			
				214	4	6
By One Year's Salary to the Secretary				105	0	0
By Bankers' Expences on Country Notes				0	3	2
By Cost of £400. Exchequer Bills, deposited in the hands of Messrs. Cave, Ames, & Cave, Treasurers				419	4	8
				£738	12	4

Commercial Room, Monday, Jan. 26, 1824.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Chamber, held this day, at the Commercial Room,

Mr. THOS. STOCK, V.P. in the Chair,

The Report from the Board of Directors having been read,

It was moved by JOHN SCANDRET HARFORD, Esq. seconded by Mr. JOHN HILL, and *Resolved unanimously*, That the Report now read be received and adopted, and that it be forthwith printed and distributed under the direction of the Board of Directors.

It was moved by Mr. THOMAS KINGTON, seconded by Lieut.-General BROWNE, and *Resolved unanimously*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the President, the Vice-Presidents, and the Board of Directors, for their indefatigable attention to the interests of the Chamber; and for the firm, temperate, and conciliatory conduct hitherto pursued by them in their communications with the Common Council of the City, relative to the subject of Local Taxation; and that they be requested to continue their exertions in the same important and laudable undertaking.

It was moved by Mr. STEPHEN PRUST, seconded by Mr. SAMUEL JAMES, and *Resolved unanimously*, That the following Gentlemen be appointed a Committee to solicit Subscriptions throughout the City, to enable the Board to carry into effect the foregoing Resolution, and that they be requested forthwith to divide them-

selves into District Committees, and adopt such other measures for the furtherance of this necessary object, as they may think advisable, viz.—

Mr. GEORGE THOMAS,	Mr. A. S. CORRICK,
Mr. THOMAS REYNOLDS,	Mr. PHILIP JONES,
Mr. JOHN E. LUNELL,	Mr. H. VISGER, Jun.
Mr. ROBERT BRUCE, Jun.	Mr. WM. MULLOWNEY,
Mr. JOHN LEWIS,	Mr. GEORGE JONES,
Mr. JAMES LYON,	Mr. JOHN HARE, Jun.
Mr. THOMAS THORNE,	Mr. JOHN WILLIS,
Mr. GEORGE SANDERS,	Mr. THOMAS RANKIN
Mr. CHRIS. GEORGE,	Mr. WILLIAM TOWGOOD.
Mr. W. E. ACRAMAN,	

And that they have power to add to their number.

It was moved by Mr. JOSEPH COOKSON, seconded by Mr. FREDERICK RICKETTS, and *Resolved unanimously*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to RICHARD HART DAVIS, and Henry BRIGHT, Esqrs. our Representatives in Parliament, for the great attention which they have invariably paid to the applications of this Chamber, and more particularly for the readiness with which they complied with the request of the Chamber, to introduce to his Majesty's Ministers, the Deputation engaged on the subject of Local Taxation.

It was moved by Mr. JOSEPH METFORD, Jun. seconded by Mr. J. E. NASH, and *Resolved unanimously*, That the Plan proposed by the Board of Directors, for enabling the Chamber to undertake the arbitration of differences in matters relating to Trade or Accounts, be adopted, and that it be embodied in the Rules of the Chamber.

It was moved by Mr. G. E. SANDERS, seconded by Mr. W. E. ACRAMAN, and *Resolved unanimously*, That the Audited Accounts and

the Resolutions of this Meeting, signed by the Chairman, be published once in each of the Bristol Papers.

THOMAS STOCK, V. P.
Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, it was *Resolved unanimously*, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. STOCK, for his able conduct.

G. HELLICAR,
Secretary.

[J. M. GUTCH, PRINTER, BRISTOL.]

Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT

OF

THE BOARD

TO A

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 18th of February, 1824,

TO RECEIVE

FROM THE BOARD A REPORT OF THE

Proceedings of the Deputation sent to London,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

LOCAL TAXATION;

AND

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CHAMBER

THEREON.

ALSO THE

ARBITRATION RULE

Passed at the Annual Meeting on the 26th January, 1824.

A. Brown, Printer, Bristol Mirror Office.

REPORT.

THE Board of Directors have convened the Chamber to receive the Report of the Deputation appointed under the Resolutions of the Chamber on the 2d ult., and which proceeded to London, by direction of the Board, with the primary object of ascertaining how far his Majesty's Government would be pleased to support the Chamber in an application to the Legislature, for an Inquiry into the Local Taxation of this Port, with a view to the removal, reduction, or equalization of it, as should be found requisite and practicable.

The Board refer to their Reports on the subject of Local Taxation, of the 2d and 26th ult.; and they have now to communicate to the Chamber, the further proceedings of the Deputation as they have been reported to the Board.

On their arrival in London on the 2d inst., the Deputation waited on the Representatives for the City, with the following Letter:—

"The Deputation from the Bristol Chamber of Commerce having returned to Town, feel much pleasure in waiting upon Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright, with a Copy of Resolutions, unanimously passed at a Meeting of the Chamber on the 26th ult., conveying the Thanks of the Chamber to the Representatives in Parliament, for the particular attentions received from them; in which the Deputation personally wish to express their concurrence.

"As it is understood that a Deputation from the Common Council is in Town, this Deputation, in compliance with the anxious desire at all times entertained by the Chamber of Commerce for conciliation with the Common Council, and for their co-operation with the Chamber, in removing the grievances complained of, beg to express, through the medium of Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright, that they will be most happy to enter upon a conference or communication on the subject.

"*Salopian Coffee-House,*
"*2d Feb.* 1824."

Our Representatives very politely expressed themselves gratified with the thanks voted to them by the Chamber; and added, that it would give them the greatest pleasure if any points in difference between the parties could be arranged by their mediation.

No opportunity however was afforded to the Board's Deputation for the conference or communication with the Deputation of the Common Council, which had been solicited by the above Letter; but on the contrary they were subsequently given to understand, that none was contemplated on the part of the Common Council, either on that occasion or in the future stages of the measures intended by them. The Deputation, accompanied by the Representatives, had the honour of a second interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade, on the 6th inst.; and the interest manifested by these Right Honourable Gentlemen, in the case submitted to them, at this, as well as at the separate interviews had with them previously, was such as to afford to the Deputation the highest satisfaction.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer informed them, that he had, since their first interview

with him, seen a Deputation from the Common Council, who had stated to him, that the Common Council were ready and willing, as a matter of grace and favour, to make an alteration in the Dues complained of, which would relieve the Port; and that they had contemplated this measure before any application had been made to them by the Chamber of Commerce.

That the Common Council had been told by their Law Advisers, that they could not reduce their Port Dues otherwise than by Act of Parliament; and that, therefore, it was their intention to bring in a Bill, to give them the power of reducing the Dues as should appear to them expedient, with a provision, that, under no circumstances, a greater amount should be collected from them than there was at present; and that the Bill would be brought in (as both the Right Honourable Gentlemen understood) as soon as the forms of the Common Council and of Parliament would allow.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer further stated, that the Deputation had expressed to him, that the Common Council had resolved, if any thing compulsory, or any invasion of their rights was attempted to be introduced into the Bill, to abandon it, and stand upon their legal rights. With regard to this point, the Right Honourable Gentleman also observed, that if the legality of the exactions were disputed, it must of course be in a Court of Law; that if this was not now called in question by the Chamber of Commerce, as he understood it was not, he did not see that Parliament could interfere to *take away* the legal right of the Corporation to these Dues,

however onerous they might be to the Port, if misapplication of the Corporate funds was not alleged. The Chancellor of the Exchequer concluded by recommending to the Chamber to await the result of the measures about to be taken by the Common Council; adding, that he thought an arrangement satisfactory to the parties to be easier and nearer than either side contemplated, if nothing irritating was said or done; and in this opinion the President of the Board of Trade, as well as our representatives, concurred.

The Board sincerely congratulate the Chamber that the Common Council do now feel convinced of the importance of the subject, and of the necessity for alteration, and thus tacitly admit the ground of the complaints, pressed upon their consideration by the several Memorials of this Board; a circumstance which must be a source of satisfaction to the Chamber.

The intentions of the Common Council, as explained to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade, are also no less gratifying to this Board; which considers the removal, reduction, or equalization of the Port Dues as may be practicable, to be a measure absolutely necessary to the commercial and general prosperity of the City; an opinion which they understood to have been also expressed by the above Right Honourable Gentlemen.

The Board indeed regrets, that the Common Council should, without assigning a cause, have declined hitherto the conference and communication solicited by this Board,—inasmuch as this Board still conceives that such a measure would be the most conducive to the

satisfactory arrangement contemplated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

This Board however repeats its single object and desire to be, that the requisite relief may, by whatever means, be obtained to the Port; and it therefore observes with pleasure, that a measure has been originated in Parliament by the Common Council for bringing in a Bill for this purpose.

The Board hails this early movement of the Common Council as an earnest of their intention to propose such measures to the Legislature, as may be calculated to satisfy the just and reasonable expectations of all those who are interested in the prosperity of the Port; and it congratulates the Chamber upon the prospect now presented to them of the object they have so long contemplated being effected by the Common Council, in such manner, by such ways and means, and under such regulations and restrictions, as to the wisdom of the Legislature shall seem meet.

The Board have to notice, that it appears by the printed Votes and Proceedings of the House of Commons on the 16th inst., that the Petition of the Common Council has been reported, and the Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. BRIGHT and Mr. R. H. DAVIS; which measure may therefore be very speedily expected.

(Signed) JOSEPH COOKSON,

VICE-PRESIDENT.

At the Commercial Rooms,

18th Feb. 1824.

At a Meeting of the Chamber, specially convened to receive a Report from the Board of Directors of the Proceedings of the Deputation sent to London, in pursuance of the Resolutions of the Chamber on the 2d of February last, and to enter into Resolutions thereon,

Mr. Vice-President STOCK

IN THE CHAIR;

the foregoing Report having been read,—*it was unanimously Resolved*,—

Firstly—That the Report now read be received; and that it be printed, and circulated at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Secondly—That the Chamber approves the proceedings of the Board and its Deputation, and particularly the conciliatory disposition shewn in soliciting a conference with the Deputation of the Common Council; and that the Chamber is anxious that the same line of conduct should be constantly preserved.

Thirdly—That, from an unfeigned respect

for the opinions of his Majesty's Ministers, who received the Deputation with so much condescending attention, and from a deference to the concurring sentiments of our Representatives in Parliament, the Chamber cheerfully consents to await the proceedings of the Common Council, by deferring its proposed application for Parliamentary relief; trusting that the measures to be brought forward by the Common Council, will be such as to satisfy the just and reasonable expectations of the Chamber.

Fourthly—That inasmuch as the Common Council have not as yet conferred or communicated, either with the Chamber or Board, or with the body of Burgesses, upon the nature and extent of the intended Bill, the Chamber is under the necessity of reserving its opinions on the subject until the Bill has been submitted to the Legislature.

Fifthly—That the Board of Directors be requested to continue an unabated attention to their present most important duties, and that they be requested to communicate their observations and proceedings to the Chamber, as they shall see fit; and that, with this view, this Meeting shall stand adjourned to such day as the Board shall fix, giving two clear days' notice by post of any Meeting.

Sixthly—That a Copy of the above Report and Resolutions be respectfully forwarded by the Chairman, to the Right Hon. Frederick John Robinson Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Right Hon. William Huskisson President of the Board of Trade; likewise to the Representatives in Parliament for the City.

Also to the Right Worshipful the MAYOR, the Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers, and to the Board of Directors of the Bristol Dock Company.

Adjourned.

(Signed) THOMAS STOCK,

VICE-PRESIDENT.

Additional Rule of the Chamber,

Passed at the Annual Meeting, on the 26th January, 1824.—(See Rules and Regulations of the Chamber, and Report of Provisional Committee, p. 18, and Annual Report of Board, p. 5, 23.)

ARBITRATIONS.

XII.—That in cases where a difference shall arise upon any matter relating to Trade or Accounts, between persons one or both of whom shall be Members of the Chamber, and the parties are desirous of submitting the matter to the decision of an Arbitration, under the direction of the Board, the same shall be received; subject nevertheless in each case to the discretion of the Board.

In order to such a proceeding, the parties shall state in writing the subject matter of the dispute to the Standing Committee or the Secretary, who shall submit the same to

the Board of Directors at the next Monthly Meeting, or at a Special Meeting.

At such Meeting the Board shall proceed to Elect by ballot five of its Members, as a Deputation for the Arbitration ; which number shall be reduced by each party in difference striking out one name, and the remaining three Directors shall then undertake the arbitration.

Instruments of reference, to be approved by the Arbitrators, shall then be executed by the respective parties; such instruments reserving a power of compensating the Arbitrators for their time, and also a power of moderate extension of the time for the determination of such difference ; but, previously to the availing themselves of such power of extension, the Arbitrators shall report in writing their reasons to the Board, and obtain its sanction to such delay,—and for this purpose the Arbitrators shall have power in every case to extend the time for their decision until the next Monthly Meeting of the Board.

GRESLEY HELLICAR,

SECRETARY.

BRISTOL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 13th day of March, 1824,

TO CONSIDER OF

A Bill brought into Parliament

BY THE COMMON COUNCIL,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

THE TOWN AND MAYOR's DUES,

AND

RESOLUTIONS OF THE MEETING

THEREON.

BRISTOL:
PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL-STREET

1824.

REPORT.

IN pursuance of the adjournment of the Meeting of the Chamber on the 18th ult. the Board of Directors have convened this Meeting under the following circumstances:

On the 8th instant, the Solicitors to the Corporation transmitted to the Board, a Copy of the Bill intended to be brought into Parliament by the Common Council, for altering and regulating the Town and Mayor's Dues; and on the next morning printed Copies of the same Bill were received from the Representatives for the City, with a Letter from Mr. DAVIS, anouncing that he had moved the first reading of the Bill on the preceding evening.

The printed Copy received from Mr. DAVIS is as follows:

5 GEO. *IV.*—SESS. 1824.

"*A* BILL *to enable the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol to reduce, alter, modify, and regulate certain Dues called Town Dues and Mayor's Dues, and the charging and collecting thereof.*

"WHEREAS the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol are possessed of and entitled to certain Tolls, Duties, Rates or Sums of Money called the Town Dues, payable in respect of certain Goods, Wares, and Merchandizes exported from and imported into the Port of Bristol:

"And the Mayor of the said City of Bristol, for the time being, is possessed of and entitled to certain Tolls, Duties, Rates or Sums of Money called the Mayor's Dues, payable in respect of certain Ships or Vessels arriving at the said Port:

"And whereas it is expedient, that the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty should be enabled to reduce, alter, modify and regulate the said several Tolls, Duties, Rates, and Sums of Money respectively payable as aforesaid;

"May it therefore please Your MAJESTY,

"That it may be Enacted; *And be it Enacted* by the KING's Most Excellent MAJESTY, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, THAT from and after the passing of this

Act, it shall be lawful for the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the said City of Bristol in Common Council assembled, from time to time, as and when they may see fit, for the ease of Trade or otherwise, to reduce, alter, modify, and regulate, as well the several Tolls, Duties, Rates and Sums of Money now payable to the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, and called or known by the name of the Town Dues; (the particulars whereof as the same are now payable are set forth and stated in the Schedule marked A. hereto annexed;) as also the Tolls, Duties, Rates and Sums of Money now payable to the Mayor of the said City for the time being, and called or known by the name of the Mayor's Dues, (the particulars whereof as the same are now payable are set forth and stated in the Schedule marked B. hereto annexed;) either by reducing the respective Tolls, Duties, Rates or Sums of Money now respectively payable, or any or either of them, or by substituting in lieu of the ad-valorem Duty mentioned in the said Schedule A. a certain Sum per Package, Bale, Truss, or otherwise, as they may from time to time see fit; and after any such reduction, alteration, modification, or regulation shall have been made, then for the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty in Common Council assembled, again from time to time to raise, increase, alter, modify, and regulate the same several Tolls, Duties, Rates and Sums of Money, or any or either of them respectively, either as to the Rate or Sum payable in respect of any Article or Articles, or as to the mode of charging and collecting the same; and again from time to time to reduce, alter, modify, and regulate the said several Tolls, Duties, Rates and Sums of Money, or any or either of them respectively, and the charging and collecting thereof; So that the said several Tolls, Duties, Rates or Sums of Money now payable, or any or either of them respectively, shall not at any time, or in any case, be raised or increased beyond the respective Rates or Sums now respectively payable in respect thereof, as the same are respectively set forth in the said Schedules—Provided always, that upon any and every such alteration being made, the same shall as soon as conveniently may be, be notified by fixing up a Table or Tables of the said several and respective Tolls, Duties, Rates or Sums of Money, and of such alteration or alterations as may be made therein respectively, at the Office of the Collector thereof, or otherwise as the said Mayor Burgesses and Commonalty in Common Council assembled, may from time to time see fit.

"And be it further enacted, that from and after the passing of this Act, until such alteration shall be made as is hereby authorized, the several Tolls, Duties, Rates and Sums of Money, set forth and stated in the said several Schedules shall continue and remain respectively due and payable as heretofore: and that when the same or any or either of them respectively shall be reduced or raised again or altered in the manner herein provided for and authorized, then and thenceforth from time to time, so far as such alteration shall extend, such altered or substituted Tolls, Duties, Rates and Sums of Money shall be respectively due and payable and be paid to the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, and the said Mayor for the time being respectively; and the same several Tolls, Duties, Rates or Sums of Money as the

same are now payable, or as the same or any or either of them respectively may be hereafter from time to time altered by virtue of the provisions herein contained, shall and may be respectively recoverable, as the said several Tolls and Duties stated in the said Schedules are now recoverable by the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, and the said Mayor for the time being, respectively.

"Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall in any manner abridge, infringe, lessen or alter any of the Rights, Privileges, Tolls, Dues, Duties, Powers, or Authorities of the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the said City of Bristol, or any of the accustomed Rights and Privileges of the said City; (save only as herein is enacted) any thing hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

"And be it further enacted, that this Act shall be deemed and taken as a Public Act, and shall be judicially taken Notice of as such by all Judges, Justices, and others without being specially pleaded."

"SCHEDULE A.

"Duties payable to the Mayor Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol, called the Town Dues.

"A Toll or Duty of Twopence in the Pound according to the value of all Goods, Wares and Merchandize (except as hereinafter mentioned) being the property of Persons not free of the City of Bristol, nor otherwise legally exempted from the payment of such Duties, imported from or exported to foreign parts beyond the seas.

"For every Hogshead of Sugar, so imported or exported as aforesaid, the sum of Sixpence.

"For every Hogshead of Tobacco, so imported or exported as aforesaid, the like sum of Sixpence.

"For every Butt or Pipe of Wine, so imported or exported as aforesaid, the sum of One Shilling.

"For every Ton of Corn exported from the Port of Bristol to any part of Ireland, or imported therefrom into the said Port of Bristol, the sum of Sixpence.

"The aforesaid Duty of Two Pence in the Pound, so far as relates to Bags of Foreign Wool and Packages of Irish Linen, is accepted and taken by the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, according to an average valuation at £9 per Bag of Foreign Wool, and £36 per Bag of Irish Linen."

"SCHEDULE B.

"Duties payable to the Mayor of Bristol for the time being, called the Mayor's Dues.

"For every Ship or Vessel above the burden of Sixty Tons coming from any place below the Islands called the Stipe Holme and the Flat Holme, upon the arrival of such Ships or Vessels at either of the Quays or Back of Bristol, or the Canals, Wharfs, Docks, and other places, being part and parcel of the Port of Bristol, the Sum of Forty Shillings

The Document thus communicated to the Board has received its serious and deliberate consideration; it has been perused however with feelings of the severest disappointment and regret, inasmuch as the principle of the Bill is one which can be viewed in no other light, than as *merely nugatory;* and as in its present form, it affords no measure of the relief for which the Chamber has anxiously been looking, and which the expressions of the Common Council have encouraged it to expect.

The ostensible object of the Bill is to make it lawful for the Common Council to reduce, alter, modify and regulate the obnoxious Taxation, if and when they shall see fit :—a power which they have exercised from time to time hitherto, without reserve or difficulty, and to legalize which therefore it should be presumed, that no enabling grant from the Legislature is necessary.

Throughout the Bill no pledge or assurance is given, that the Taxation which the Common Council have so long levied to the injury of the Trading Interests of the City, will at any given time, or in any degree, be mitigated. No Security is afforded, that, if at any time the Common Council or their Successors should concede some abatement of their Claims, they may not at their next Meeting be renewed to their former amount. Some Enactments, however, of a nature yet more objectionable, are proposed in the Bill, which indeed must have struck every Member of the Chamber with feelings of serious apprehension and alarm.

The Bill recites broadly that the Corporation and Mayor respectively are entitled to the Dues claimed by them, and proposes to enact that the present Dues, or any altered Rates (should the Common Council agree upon such) shall be

due, and payable, *and be paid*, as at present—Thus rendering for ever indefeasible the Title to these Dues, and taking away the inherent right of any Individual concerned to dispute their Legality.

Whilst such opinions on this subject prevailed throughout the Board, it was upon the whole matter thought proper on the 11th instant, to aproach the Mayor by a Deputation of Directors, who expressed to his Worship, that this Board considered the Bill in its present form as *highly objectionable*, and inquired of his Worship whether it was in his power to state, that the Common Council would admit of any modification of the Clauses of the Bill, or otherwise;—this Board being in the last degree anxious that their objections to it should be removed previously to its second reading, and also if the opportunity were afforded them, to meet the Common Council in conference, in order to the explanation and accommodation of the points in difference: The Deputation verbally added their regret that no opportunity for conference had hitherto been afforded to the Board.

In answer to the Deputation, The Mayor replied that he would cause the Committee of the Common Council to be called together on the subject, as on the next day, and inform them of the purport of the Deputation.

The Board have further to report, that yesterday the following communication was forwarded by the Solicitors to the Corporation:

"At a MEETING of the COMMITTEE appointed by the COMMON COUNCIL, relative to the Bill for altering and modifying the TOWN and MAYOR'S DUES, on Friday, the 12th day of March 1824,

"MR. MAYOR laid before the Committee a Resolution from the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, delivered to him yesterday by a Deputation from the Board, relative to the Bill brought into Parliament on the subject of the Town and Mayor's Dues,—which having been read,

"*Resolved*, That this Committee very much regret, that after the great pains and attention bestowed by the Corporation in framing the Bill, with a view to afford the utmost relief in their power, to the Trade of the Port; the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, should consider such Bill in its present form as highly objectionable; but that if the Board of Directors will have the goodness to transmit their objections to any Clause or Clauses in the said Bill, this Committee will take the same into consideration at their earliest possible convenience."

To this Communication the following Reply has been forwarded by the Board:—

"*Bristol Chamber of Commerce*,
"*Committee Room*, 13*th March*, 1824.

"THE Board of Directors of the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE has received the Resolution of the Committee appointed by the COMMON COUNCIL, relative to the *Bill for altering and modifying the Town and Mayor's Dues*, dated the 12th March, 1824; and, after a mature consideration of the same, the Board has the pleasure of transmitting to the Right Worshipful the MAYOR the following Resolutions:

"*First*—That the Board acknowledges the favour of the promptitude with which its communication through the Deputation has been answered by the Committee of the Common Council.

"*Second*.—That the invitation to transmit its objections to any clause or clauses in the said Bill, is viewed as an indication of a disposition on the part of the Common Council to open the door to an amicable arrangement of a subject so important to the Trade and Commerce of the City.

"*Third*—That the Board finds an insuperable objection to the preamble of the Bill, as also to the clause absolutely providing for the payment of the present or any altered rates; inasmuch as they go to a recognition, by legislative enactment, of a right, on the part of the Common Council, to the *Town Dues* and *Mayor's Dues*;—the Board conceiving that such right should be left by the proposed Bill as it now stands, without any confirmation.

"*Fourth*—The Board also respectfully submits;—That in the intended enactment which follows, the time when any proposed reduction of the *Town* and *Mayor's Dues* shall take place should be strictly defined, and the *extent of such reduction* and alteration should be settled and described in a *Schedule* for that purpose, and should not be made subject to any future increase.

"The Board avails itself of this opportunity respectfully to request, that the Committee will favour it with the earliest intimation of the period when it is proposed to move the second reading of the Bill.

"The Board, agreeably with the invitation offered by the Common Council, thinks it right thus freely to offer these objections to the Bill, and it cherishes the hope, that [thus candidly expressed] its sentiments will receive the favourable consideration of the Committee of the Common Council."

The receipt of the foregoing communication from the Common Council, necessarily occasions a change in the measures which the Board had prepared to recommend to the Chamber.

The Board now congratulates the Chamber upon this opening towards an accommodation, which it hopes may result in a favorable issue. With this feeling and out of a deference to the Common Council, it suspends the observations which, in the event of a necessity for meeting the question in Parliament, it would have been the duty of the Board to have made.

(Signed)

THOMAS STOCK,

Vice-President.

At the Commerciol Rooms,
13*th March* 1824.

At a Meeting of the Chamber, specially convened to take into consideration the Bill brought into Parliament by the Common-Council, on the subject of the Town and Mayor's Dues,

Mr. Vice-President STOCK,

IN THE CHAIR;

the foregoing Report having been read,—*it was unanimously Resolved,*—

Firstly—That the Report now read be received; and that it be printed, with the Resolutions, and circulated at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Secondly—That the Chamber cordially concurs in the opinion which the Board has expressed on the subject of the proposed Bill; and considers it to be a Bill, against the passing of which, in its present form, the Chamber will feel it its duty to Petition the Legislature.

Thirdly—That a Letter from the Chairman be respectfully addressed to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, apprising him of the intention of the Chamber to present such Petition, with the view of placing the Chamber of Com-

merce in a situation to oppose the Bill, if the negociation at present in progress with the Common Council should unfortunately fail of producing a satisfactory result.

Fourthly—That the Chamber participates in the hope expressed by the Board, that the invitation of the Common Council will lead to such an accommodation of the present question, as will preserve that harmony throughout the City, which it is the sincere wish of the Chamber should be maintained.

Fifthly—That as a precautionary measure, this Chamber, though still hoping for accommodation with the Common Council, Resolves, with the view mentioned in the 3rd Resolution, That the Petition to the House of Commons now read, be signed, and that at the discretion of the Board it be forwarded to our Representatives in Parliament for presentation, with a request that they will support the same as circumstances may render necessary.

Sixthly—That application be made by the Chairman to the Committee of the Commercial Rooms, for permission to place the Petition on the Table of the Rooms for Signature.

Seventhly—That the Board be requested to persevere in its attention to the subject, and to adopt such measures as circumstances may render necessary.

Eightly—That a Copy of the above Report and Resolutions be respectfully forwarded by the Chairman to the Right Honourable FREDERICK JOHN ROBINSON, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Right Honourable WILLIAM HUSKISSON, President of the Board of Trade; likewise to the Representatives in Parliament

for the City; also to the Right Worshipful the Mayor; the Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Board of Directors of the Bristol Dock Company.

Ninthly—That the Chamber do further adjourn until two days notice of another Meeting be given by the Board.

(Signed)

THOMAS STOCK,

Chairman.

The subjoined Petition was accordingly signed by the Meeting.

"To the Honorable the COMMONS of the UNITED KINGDOM of GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND in PARLIAMENT assembled.

"The Humble PETITION of the several Persons whose Names are hereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and others, being BURGESSES and INHABITANTS of the City and County of the CITY of BRISTOL,

"SHEWETH,—That your Petitioners have seen a Bill now pending in this Honorable House, to enable the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the City of Bristol to reduce, alter, modify and regulate certain Dues called Town Dues and Mayor's Dues, and the charging and collecting thereof.

"That the said Bill contains divers Clauses, Powers and Provisions, which if passed into a Law, will be extremely prejudicial to the Rights and Interests of your Petitioners.

"Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray this Honorable House that they may be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents and Witnesses against the same, and that the said Bill may not pass into a Law."

GRESLEY HELLICAR,

Secretary.

BRISTOL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

FURTHER

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AT

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

On the 7th of April, 1824,

WITH

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT,

At an Adjournment of the above, on the 9th April,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

Local Taxation.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL-STREET.

1824.

REPORT.

THE Board have to report that subsequently to the last Meeting of the Chamber on the 13th ult. the Board has been highly gratified by the receipt from the Society of Merchant Venturers, of a Copy of a Report transmitted by that Body to the Common Council, in pursuance of the invitation contained in the Resolutions of the Common Council of the 1st of November last. They regret that a request that this document should not be published, (which accompanied the transmission of it) deprives the Chamber, for the present, of that accession of support which must be secured to the object and views of the Chamber by the circulation of a document in which so much ability and research, accompanied by liberal and enlightened sentiments upon the subject of discussion, are evinced.

The Board is in hopes that this restriction will speedily be removed by the transmission to it of this document by the Common Council, but the Chamber will have the satisfaction of hearing it now read by the Secretary.

[*The Report was accordingly read to the Chamber.*]

The Board also made application to the Society of Merchants for a Copy of the Opinion, which it is understood to have delivered in to the Common Council upon the provisions of the Town Dues Bill; they regret, however, that they are not enabled to lay it before the Cham-

ber at this Meeting, but from the tenor of the Report they cannot but be sanguine as to its general concurrence with the view of the Bill taken by the Chamber.

In continuation of the correspondence detailed in the Report of the 13th ult. the following Resolutions have been passed between the Chamber of Commerce and the Board:—

"At a Meeting of the Committee appointed by the Corporation relative to the Bill for altering and modifying the Town and Mayor's Dues, on Monday the 15th day of March 1824:

Mr. Mayor laid before the Committee a Copy of the Resolutions of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce passed on Saturday last, and transmitted to him by the Vice-President; and the said Resolutions having been read and taken into consideration,

Resolved—That the Corporation in framing the Bill had no view to obtain a recognition by legislative enactment, of any right to the Town Dues and Mayor's Dues, which they do not at present possess; on the contrary, they are fully satisfied of the validity of their title thereto. If they were not so, it would be unworthy the character and respectability of a Public Body to attempt by indirect means to acquire a right not appearing upon the face of the Bill, to be its real object.

The Corporation therefore will not hesitate, provided the other objections stated in the Resolutions of the Chamber of Commerce can be reconciled, to consent to the introduction of a Clause in the proposed Bill, which shall restrict them from demanding or receiving any Dues, which they were not legally entitled to at the time of passing the Act.

With reference to the 4th Resolution, the Committee feel surprised, that any doubt should be entertained of the sincerity of the intention to afford that relief to the Trade of the Port, which is the sole object of the Bill. If however any misunderstanding should still exist as to the real intention of the Corporation, the Committee now explicitly repeat, that the sole object of the Corporation in entering into this measure, is to afford such prompt and effectual relief to the Trade of the Port as circumstances shall admit. At the same time the alterations will not only require great deliberation in their first formation, but must also necessarily from time to time be modified and varied.

The Committee therefore think it right in this stage of the proceedings to inform the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, that they cannot consent by the intended enactment, that the precise time when the proposed reduction shall take place should be defined, or that the extent thereof should be settled and described in a Schedule and not made subject to any future increase; but it is the hope and expectation of the Corporation,

that they shall be enabled by the 29th of September next, to frame such a Schedule of the proposed reductions and alterations as will prove satisfactory to the city.

The Committee have directed that the earliest intimation shall be given to the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of the period, which may be fixed for the 2nd reading of the Bill."

"*Bristol Chamber of Commerce, Committee Room, 20th March* 1824.

"At a Meeting of the Board of Directors, the Resolutions of the Committee of the Common Council relative to the Bill for altering and modifying the Town and Mayor's Dues, dated the 15th inst. being in Reply to the Resolutions of this Board, dated the 13th inst. were read; and the same having been maturely considered,—

It was resolved, 1stly.—That in case provisions shall be introduced into the Bill, effectually providing that the same shall not in any wise alter or affect the title to the Town and Mayor's Dues; and that any defence against payment of the present Dues, which may exist at the passing of the Act, shall remain equally available against payment of any future Rates, the objection of this Board on that head will be removed.

2ndly.—That this Board very deeply regrets to observe in the last Resolution of the Committee of the Common Council, the absolute declaration that they cannot consent that by the intended Enactment *the time should be defined*, when the proposed reduction and alteration in the Town and Mayor's Dues shall take place; nor that the extent thereof *should be settled and described in a Schedule*, without being subject to *future increase*; inasmuch as this Board is of opinion, that any Bill which may be wanting in these essential particulars will be unsatisfactory to the City, and would leave the trade of the Port under such a degree of uncertainty and doubt as to its charges, as might be expected to operate very prejudicially on the minds of Foreign Merchants trading with it; this Board therefore considers it indispensable, that by the said Bill a Package Rate should be universally substituted for the *ad valorem* Tax, and that the maximum of such Rates, and the period for their commencement should be fixed. Unless therefore the Committee of the Common Council shall be pleased to reconsider their Resolution on this head, this Board feels, that it will be unavailing to enter upon further discussion of the provisions of the Bill.

3rdly—That this Board, continuing of opinion, that the difficulties in the present case would be most easily removed by personal Communication, avails itself of the present occasion to repeat its sincere regret, that the Common Council have hitherto declined all conference with the Chamber of Commerce, and to express its hope, that the Common Council will still revise their determination in that respect, as the most probable means for producing an amicable arrangement of a question of such general importance to the city.

4thly.—That this Board desires to express its thanks to the Committee of the Common Council for the assurance, that the earliest intimation will be given to it of the period, which may be fixed for the second reading of the Bill.

5thly.—That these Resolutions be signed by the Chairman, and be forthwith forwarded by him to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, with a request that he will lay them before the Committee of the Common Council at his earliest convenience."

No reply to the above Resolutions having been received on the 30th ult. a Deputation of the Board waited on the Right Worshipful the Mayor, to whom his Worship acknowledged the receipt of those Resolutions, and stated that the Common Council had taken the same into consideration; that the 2nd Resolution of the Board had stated further discussion to be unavailing, unless the Corporation gave up certain points, *which they could not;* that they therefore considered *that no reply was necessary* on the part of the Corporation, *and that no reply would be returned.*

The points referred to as contained in the Board's 2nd Resolution above set forth, will be seen to be, that *by the intended enactment the time should be defined, when the reduction and alteration of the Town and Mayor's Dues proposed by the Common Council should take place,* and that the extent thereof should be *settled and described in a Schedule, without being subject to future increase.*

The refusal of any degree of legislative relief, as conveyed by the above answer of the Common Council, without a proviso or qualification whereby the Board might be justified in hoping, that any event or modification of circumstances might induce the Common Council to recon-

sider their determination, has left the Board deeply to regret, that their utmost endeavours to obtain an amicable accommodation of the question have failed.

The Board having only to conjecture the course intended by the Common Council with regard to the Bill, availed themselves of the service of a Deputation in London to obtain advice as to the most expedient method to be adopted under any event, for procuring that parliamentary enquiry into the subject of discussion which has been the object of the Chamber, and from which there is every reason to hope that means will be devised for affording the relief sought by this Chamber with justice to conflicting interests. The Deputation had the honour of interviews with Gentlemen whose established character and Parliamentary reputation are a sanction to any measures which may be adopted under their advice.

It was the opinion of these Gentlemen, upon a review of the correspondence, that most desirable as the amicable adjustment of the points of discussion would be, the last communication from the Common Council had left no room for any reasonable expectation on the part of the Chamber, for that most desirable end. And amongst the several methods which have suggested themselves, the Deputation were advised that by a discussion of the subject in a Committee upon the present Bill, that enquiry which was the object of the Chamber would be most speedily attained; and the Board were accordingly advised to move the second reading of the Bill on the 13th inst. unless the Common Council should previously take measures for that purpose; and an Hon. Member, whose name would not fail of commanding general re-

spect, most kindly promised his assistance to move to that effect on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. The Board having on the 5th inst. come to the determination of pursuing the course thus pointed out, immediately transmitted a copy of the following Resolutions to the Mayor:—

"5th April, 1824.

"*Resolved*, That from the time which has elapsed since the first reading of the Town Dues Bill, and from the Common Council having declined giving a Reply to the Resolutions of this Board of the 20th ult. it is to be apprehended that the Bill will be dropt or withdrawn by the Common Council.

"*Resolved*, That as this Board considers it of the last consequence that the present Session of Parliament should not close without some Legislative measure being adopted for affording the relief to the Trade of the Port which is universally admitted to be necessary, this Board, in concurrence with the advice it has received from several Members of Parliament, will feel it its duty to take the necessary steps for procuring the second reading of the Bill on Tuesday the 13th inst. (should the Common Council not in the mean time take decisive measures for that purpose) in order to ensure the investigation of the subject by the Legislature.

"*Resolved*, That a Copy of the foregoing Resolutions be forthwith forwarded by the Chairman to the Right Worshipful the Mayor."

The Board entertains the hope, that the numerous and weighty Petitions which are expected from various Ports, Towns and Districts, which have been roused to a consideration of the subject, and whose interests are involved with that of Bristol, in the present question, will not fail to awaken the attention of Parliament to the important and extensive bearing of the subject.

But effectually to prosecute the measures which are submitted to the Chamber, it will be obvious that its exertions, great as they have been, must be redoubled;—the Funds which have been accumulated for the purpose must be enlarged;—it is hoped at the same time, that every individual will, in common with the Board, consider his contribution but as an in-

vestment for the improvement of his property, and the advantage of his posterity whilst connected with the City; to the productiveness of which this Board looks forward with animating expectations.

The Board would have rejoiced were it possible to have obtained its object by negociation. That the result has proved the contrary, is a cause to them of the sincerest regret. They believe that on a dispassionate review of the whole correspondence with the Common Council, it will appear that every opportunity has been sought and embraced by the Board, by which an arrangement might have been attained without a compromise of the interests which the Chamber has advocated. The conclusion of the correspondence on the part of the Common Council is, indeed, such as to leave the Chamber no alternative, but either to abandon unconditionally the advances already made towards relief, as well as the objections which the Chamber has stated to the Bill, and to the unequal and destructive system of taxation which it gives the power to confirm and perpetuate; or otherwise that it remains to the Chamber to use such ways and expedients as shall be within its power, for carrying its just complaints to a tribunal of enlightened policy and impartial justice; a tribunal to which the Common Council themselves have already submitted, when they prayed permission of the House of Commons to pass a Bill for effecting their proposed purposes "in such manner, by such ways and means, and under such regulations and restrictions, as to that Honourable House should seem meet."

The Board however conceives, that a crisis has now arrived at which it becomes imperative on the Burgesses and general Interests of the

city to come forward and co-operate with the Chamber, in upholding the declining prosperity of the city, and in prosecuting the present opportunity for that purpose, as the last and only one which can in all probability occur.

The Board entertains the hope that a public avowal on the part of the City of its opinion on the subject of discussion, may yet convince the Common Council that the interests which the Chamber has advocated, and the assertions which it has advanced, are not those of individuals, but such as meet the concurrence of the City, for which the Common Council holds its trust, and in which its renewed prosperity, or ultimate decline, are closely bound up.

(Signed) JOSEPH COOKSON.
Vice-President.

At the Commercial Rooms,
7th April 1824.

At a Special Meeting of the Chamber, convened to consider a Communication received from the Common Council by the Board on the subject of the Town Dues Bill,

Mr. Vice-President COOKSON,
in the Chair;

The foregoing Report having been read, the Chairman stated that the Board had received on that day a very short time before the meeting of the Chamber, and after the Board had concluded its Report, Copies of certain Resolutions from the Common Council, upon which the Board was not prepared to deliver any opinion, whereupon it was

Resolved unanimously,

Firstly—That the Report now read be received and approved, and that it be printed and circulated at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Secondly—That the Board be desired to adopt such measures relating to the second reading of the Bill as they may deem expedient, under the present prospect of an early adjournment of Parliament.

Thirdly—That the Meeting do now adjourn to Friday, at Twelve o'clock, at this place, to give the Board an opportunity of considering the Communication received this Morning from the Common Council.

(Signed) JOSEPH COOKSON,
Chairman.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT.

9th APRIL.

THE Board report that they have taken into consideration the Resolutions received from the Common Council, which were referred back to the Board on the 7th inst. and which were as follows:—

"At a Meeting of the Committee appointed by the Common Council relative to the Bill for reducing and altering the Town and Mayor's Dues, on Wednesday the 24th day of March, 1824,

"Certain Resolutions of the Chamber of Commerce, of the date of the 20th inst., in reply to the Resolutions of this Committee of the 15th inst. were read and taken into consideration,—

"*Resolved unanimously*,—That it is the primary duty of this Committee to bear in their recollection, that the Corporation of Bristol are possessed by indisputable right of the Dues in question.

"That whatever sacrifice the Corporation might think proper to make, it must and ought to be looked upon as a voluntary concession, and should not be demanded as a right. If the validity of their title could be affected, the Corporation would be the first to abandon any claims which could not be substantiated by law; and it was on the assumption that their title was not questioned that the Bill was originally framed. When however it was insinuated, that the Corporation sought by indirect means to obtain a confirmation by legislative enactment of their rights, this Committee felt satisfied that the Corporation would throw back with disdain, an insinuation so unworthy of the good faith and honor evinced by them through every stage of this proceeding. They therefore, without a moment's hesitation, consented to and proposed a Clause calculated to preclude the Corporation from any right not already possessed by them. They had hoped that this concession would have been received as an earnest of the sincerity of the Corporation to carry into effect their intentions for the benefit of the trade of the Port. But they perceive with regret, that the proceedings of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce are still framed, with an ultimate view to hostility and opposition to the Bill. If this had not been the case, the Chamber of Commerce would not have prepared a Petition to the House of Commons against the Bill, at the very moment when negociating with this Committee on certain of its provisions, the principle of which negociation could only be kept alive by the utmost cordiality and good understanding between the parties; This Committee, in their Resolution of the 15th inst. forbore any remark on this extraordinary proceeding, keeping only in mind the single object which they had in view, and hoping that by the concession then made, the Board of Directors would be satisfied of the reality of the intentions of the Corporation, and would meet with alacrity their views.

"This Committee, however, now perceive, that in the 2d Resolution of he Chamber of Commerce, it is expressly stated, that unless this Committee will reconsider and alter their Resolution, refusing to define the time when the proposed reduction and alteration of the Town and Mayor's Dues should take place, and that the extent thereof should be described in a Schedule, without being subject to future increase, the Board feels it unavailing to enter upon further discussion of the provisions of the Bill. This Committee, therefore, considers, that the Board has itself by such Resolution put an end to the negociation, and this Committee upon the most mature consideration, not only cannot consent to alter any part of their determination on this point, but are more than ever convinced of the propriety of adhering to it, feeling satisfied that it would be impracticable at once to fix the maximum of a rate which nothing but practice and experience can render perfect.

"It is clear that the Corporation could in no manner be benefitted by passing the Bill in its present form. It is equally clear that no injury could be sustained by the Trade and Commerce of the Port, but that great relief may be afforded by the provisions of such Bill.

"With respect to a personal conference so much desired, this Committee decidedly object to a compliance with the proposal, for however respectable many of the individuals composing the Chamber of Commerce may be, that association is fluctuating, and continually changing its members. The Corporation therefore would always remain bound, whilst the acts of the Chamber of Commerce might be ratified, or not, as the views or opinions of the Persons from time to time entering into or withdrawing from that Body might change or be altered.

"This Committee feel that they should exceed the power vested in them by the Corporation, if they were to accede to any further innovation of the principle laid down by the Corporation, in their proposal for the introduction of the Bill. That principle and the pledge given on that occasion have been, in the opinion of this Committee, fully and honorably redeemed.

"This Committee, therefore, now deem it right to communicate their proceedings to the Common Council, and submit to their wisdom and discretion, the adoption of such further measures as may seem to them fitting and right on this important subject."

"At a Meeting of the Common Council, held at the Guildhall, on Saturday the 27th of March, 1824, Mr. Mayor acquainted the Common Council that the occasion of his calling them together was to receive a Report from the Committee appointed by this House, relative to the proceedings with the Chamber of Commerce, on the subject of a Bill now before Parliament for reducing and modifying the Town and Mayor's Dues, and on other Corporate affairs. And the said Report having been read and taken into consideration,

"*Resolved unanimously*—That this Corporation fully and entirely approve of the proceedings of the said Committee, and determine that the Report be in all respects adopted and confirmed.

"*Resolved unanimously*—That this Corporation, when they introduced into Parliament the Bill for reducing and regulating the Town and Mayor's Dues, could not have anticipated any opposition from the Chamber of Commerce to a measure sanctioned by the highest authorities, and having for its object the benefit of the trade and commerce of the port, and the preservation of a spirit of cordiality and harmony in the city.

"*Resolved unanimously*—That this Corporation would not be justified in expending the funds entrusted to their care in a contest, which must occasion angry and hostile feelings; and it is with reluctance that they now determine, as the only alternative, to instruct their Committee to abandon all further proceedings on the Bill, and that the said Committee be authorized to adopt such measures thereon as they in their discretion may see fit."

The Board having maturely considered the aforegoing Resolutions, have prepared a Reply thereto, which will be read to the Chamber, as follows:—

"*Bristol Chamber of Commerce Committee Room, 9th April*, 1824.

At a Meeting of the Board of Directors, the Resolutions of the Common Council, dated the 27th ult. and of its Committee appointed relative to the Bill for altering and modifying the Town and Mayor's Dues, dated the 24th ult. transmitted to this Board on the 7th inst. were read, and the same having been maturely considered,

It was Resolved unanimously,—That this Board, in adverting to the last Resolution of the Common Council, observes with the deepest regret, that instructions have been given to the Committee to abandon all further proceedings on the Town Dues Bill; a measure for which the Board is wholly unable to discover any adequate or satisfactory reason. It could not be expected that on the introduction of a Bill of such importance to the City, and interest to the Chamber, the Chamber should neglect making itself immediately a party to it, and by present-

ing a general Petition against the Bill, place the interests which it has advocated under the protection of Parliament. This precautionary step was candidly avowed and explained to the Common Council, and cannot, as the Board conceives, be dispassionately viewed either as hostile or offensive to the Corporation.

When the sentiments of the Board were invited upon the Bill, they were given, as became the Board, without reserve, and they expressed openly the points which they considered necessary to be supplied before the proposed measure could be such as to afford satisfaction or confidence to the City, or any relief or security to its Trade. Had this Board concealed such views and sentiments on the Bill until it had reached a Committee in the House, it might, indeed, have justly been chargeable with unfairness.

The Board cannot therefore but repeat its difficulty in discovering reasons which justify the abandonment of the Bill. If the proposed enactments are such as have been sanctioned by the highest authorities of the country, opposition to them, if attempted, would prove unavailing. If they are such as are consonant with the duties and avowed intentions of the Common Council towards the trading interests of the City, and such as it becomes those interests to be satisfied with, after the admission of their grievances by the Common Council, it would not be difficult for the Common Council to establish these points before an enlightened and impartial Committee of the House of Commons; and the Chamber of Commerce could have neither the wish nor means of further pursuing the subject. The Common Council must have considered the Bill to be such as has been described, or they would not, it is presumed,

have proposed it to the Legislature. If, however, it was wanting in these particulars, it was due to the City that proper amendments should have been introduced in Committee, where the rights and interests of the Corporation would not fail to receive every due protection and consideration. In either case, this Board cannot but view it as the incumbent duty of the Common Council to have proceeded with the Bill;—a duty from which neither the opinions and expressions of the Chamber or other Public Bodies, or of individuals, justify a deviation.

This Board in reviewing the imputations of hostility and opposition which, the Common Council have at different times objected to the Chamber and its Board, regrets the misconception of its measures and expressions, and still more the continued refusal by the Common Council of that conference which has been so anxiously and repeatedly solicited by this Board. A refusal, which it cannot but consider as the source of all such misconceptions, and of the continuance, at this moment, of the differences which subsist between the Common Council and a large and important Body of their fellow-citizens. Nor is the opinion of this Board as to the necessity for conference in any measure altered by the objection to it contained in the Resolutions of the Committee; namely—that the Constitution of the Chamber is liable to fluctuation, and that the acts of its Delegates require ratification. It may suffice to say, that the objection applies in equal force to the negociation which the Common Council has already invited and entered upon with the Board, and no less to the Deputation of any Trade or interest in the Empire in its application to the fountain of Government for relief. A source from which the Board

believes the same objection never to have proceeded, as indeed it could not, without rendering negociation in any shape next to impracticable.

This Board, whilst it considered it necessary in its objections to the Bill, transmitted to the Common Council, to stipulate that the title of the Corporation should not be thereby improved, thinks it right also explicitly to avow that if its other objections can be reconciled, and the proposed Bill shall be in the extent of relief secured by it approved, this Chamber on behalf of the interests represented by it, will not object to any ratification of the Dues to be secured to the Corporation, or to any clauses for their effectual collection which the Common Council may insert; nor does it object to consider the relief so to be secured, as a concession from the Corporate Body.

This Board deeply indeed regrets, that the Common Council should have terminated the negociation in a manner calculated to preclude any subsequent proposition on the part of the Chamber; but this Board considers it due to itself and to the character for conciliation, which it has ever been its object to sustain, to omit no opportunity or chance which may come within its reach, for obtaining that amicable adjustment of differences, which is on every account so desirable.

With this feeling it submits the subjoined proposition to the Common Council:—

That the Bill of the Common Council would meet the approbation of this Board, if altered so as to enact—That the Dues, now payable as Town and Mayor's Dues, should cease from and after the 29th Sept. next, from which time the Rates specified in a Schedule to be annexed, should be made absolutely payable to the Cor-

poration, with power, nevertheless, to vary them in its discretion, within the limits of the Schedule, under proper restrictions.

That by the Schedule a Package Rate should be universally substituted for the *ad valorem* Tax; and that the Rates now payable at Liverpool on goods exported and imported to and from Foreign Parts, shall form the basis and maximum of such Schedule, subject to a variation in cases where, from local circumstances, it may be considered desirable. That any surplus raised by the above Rates beyond £ per annum, shall be placed to the credit of a fund for the Redemption of the said Dues, which shall be redeemable at years purchase, the account of such fund to be annually published by the Common Council to the Burgesses.

The Board submits the aforegoing proposal to the Common Council, without any intention to preclude any proposal which may proceed from the Common Council, and with a willingness to enter upon a conference on the subject.

Resolved, That a Copy of the aforegoing Resolutions be forthwith forwarded to the Right Worshipful the Mayor."

The Board submits this Reply to the consideration of the Chamber.

(Signed) JOSEPH COOKSON,
Vice-President.

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, Friday, 9th April, 1824.

AT the adjourned Meeting of the Chamber:

Mr. Vice-President COOKSON in the Chair.

The Report and Supplementary Report of the Board, with the Resolutions of the Common Council and its Committee, referred to the Board on the 7th inst. having been read,

IT WAS RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

1*stly*.—That the Reports now read, and the Proceedings of the Board of Directors, meet the entire sanction and approbation of the Chamber; and that they be printed and circulated at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

2*ndly*.—That the reply to the Resolutions of Common Council of the 24th and 27th ult. as prepared by the Board of Directors, be fully approved by the Chamber, and be forthwith forwarded under its sanction.

3*dly*.—That the Chamber deeply regrets, that the Common Council should have closed the door to all conference, and should have given directions for the abandonment of the Bill introduced by them into Parliament, by which the hope of an amicable adjustment of differences on the points connected with the Bill between the Common Council and the Chamber is unfortunately much weakened.

4*thly*.—That the Board therefore be empowered and requested to adopt such steps, as they may be advised to be most fit and expedient for bringing the subject of the Bristol Town Dues Bill under discussion and enquiry before a Committee of the House of Commons, either by continuing the present Bill or otherwise; and do

pursue any further measures, whereby the relief sought for by the Chamber can be justly obtained.

5thly.—That in order to meet the pecuniary wants and exigencies in which the Chamber is now placed, it be recommended to those of their Fellow-Citizens, who have already subscribed towards the attainment of the object which the Chamber is endeavouring to accomplish, that they increase their Subscriptions; and that individuals, who have not already subscribed, be earnestly entreated to do so; and that the Board of Directors do adopt every measure to forward this object.

6thly.—That the Board be requested to consider forthwith, of the propriety of calling a Public Meeting of the Burgesses, and others interested in the Trade of the Port, to consider generally the subject of the Bill.

7thly.—That a Copy of the Resolutions be forwarded by the Chairman to the Right Worshipful the Mayor, the Right Hon. Fred. John Robinson, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Right Hon. Wm. Huskisson, President of the Board of Trade, likewise to the Representatives in Parliament for the city; also to the Master of the Society of Merchant Venturers, and to the Board of Directors of the Bristol Dock Company.

8thly.—That the Meeting shall stand adjourned to such day as the Board shall fix, giving two clear days' notice, by post, of any Meeting.

(Signed)
JOSEPH COOKSON, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Chamber were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

GRESLEY HELLICAR,
Secretary.

BRISTOL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ON THE

ARRANGEMENT PROVISIONALLY ENTERED INTO

RELATIVE TO THE

TOWN AND MAYOR's DUES,

WITH THE

RESOLUTIONS CONSEQUENT THEREON,

PASSED AT

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

On the 1*st of July* 1824.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL-STREET.

1824.

REPORT.

The Board reports, that in obedience to the instructions laid down for its future conduct in the Resolutions of the Chamber, passed at an adjourned Meeting held at the Commercial Rooms on the 9th April last, viz. "That the the Board be empowered and requested to adopt such steps as may be advised to be most fit and expedient for bringing the subject of the Bristol Town Dues Bill under discussion and enquiry before a Committee of the House of Commons, either by continuing the Bill or otherwise, and do pursue any further measures whereby the relief sought for by the Chamber can be justly obtained;"—it commenced a correspondence and solicited the support and Parliamentary influence of those surrounding Cities, Towns, and Manufacturing Districts, whose interests were known to be affected by the Commercial prosperity of the Port of Bristol; and the Board speedily found itself supported in its views by the principal inhabitants of those places.

From several Towns, Petitions to the House of Commons were prepared, and most respectably signed, several of which were presented, and the remainder were in the hands of Members whose strenuous support to the prayers of the Petitioners was promised. By these means, and by other measures which it is unnecessary

to detail, your Board had every reason to expect that the attention of the Legislature would have been awakened, that important discussions upon the complaints of the Petitioners would have arisen, and that due enquiry into their claims would not have been denied. At the same time that the Board felt itself so strong in the justice of its case, and the support which its cause had gained, it always kept in view, and was ever ready to avail itself of any opening for negociation and amicable adjustment of the points in dispute, which its friends might suggest or recommend, or which might arise out of the peculiar circumstances in which the Board might be placed; and on the 13th of May last, the Propositions which are now about to be laid before the Chamber were submitted to the consideration of the Gentlemen whom the Board had deputed to act for them in London, and were by them deemed worthy their serious attention;—in the first place, as they were couched in terms clearly defined and reduced into writing; and secondly, as they were grounded on principles by which, as the Deputation conceived, the Port would be materially relieved from its oppressive and partial Local Taxation. The Board was therefore induced to withhold the meditated proceedings in Parliament, and submit the propositions to the consideration of the Chamber. Before the Board however enters minutely upon the subject, it may be useful to take a cursory view of its former proceedings, and recal to the recollection of the Chamber the principal grounds on which its measures are founded.

It was the earlier duty of the Board to lay before the Chamber for its consideration, a lengthened detail of evidence and valuable information obtained from the most authentic

and respectable sources within the city, and from individuals of intelligence and experience in the several surrounding Manufacturing Districts, which, enabling the Board to form a just comparison between the Local Charges of the City and those of the leading Commercial Ports of the kingdom, exhibited in the result such proof of positive evil to the Commercial, Trading, and Manufacturing Interests of Bristol and its neighbourhood, as to call imperatively for immediate and extensive relief.

It may not be considered necessary to recal the attention of the Chamber to the voluminous documents contained in the Report of the Board of the second of January last further than to state generally, that it appeared impossible any extent of Import or Export Trade (except in the articles of Sugar, Wine, Tobacco and Wool, in favor of which a Package Rate virtually had been allowed) could be preserved to the Port, other than what might be the private trade of the few Burgesses engaged therein for home supply and consumption; and that all foreign consignments, all general Commission Trade, all export trade to order and not on the particular account of the Burgesses, would be eventually lost; thereby gradually reducing the Port to a very limited and confined scale of business, in comparison with that which from the exampie of other places it ought to enjoy. Such ruinous effects were chiefly attributable to the extent and mode of assessment of the Town Dues, since the charge of 2d in the pound *ad valorem* received to the extent of two-thirds, and sometimes to the full amount, tended, from its oppressive effect on the more valuable articles, to discourage a continuance of foreign trade, and to create in favor of other Ports a decided preference. In confirmation of this

fact it was distinctly established, that whilst the Local Charges at Bristol

	£.	s.	d.
On 97 Packages of Manchester Goods, value £7,456, amount to	42	12	5
At Liverpool they are only	3	3	2
At *Bristol* on 19 Bales of Silk, value £4468.	29	16	11
At London on the same articles	5	8	1
At *Bristol* on 61 Tons 9 Cwt. Flax	45	13	0
At Hull on the same	10	15	0
At *Bristol* on 56 Tons Galipoli Oil	29	17	4
At Hull on the same	5	12	0
At *Bristol* on 10 Trusses of Hosiery, value £600	3	9	7
At Liverpool on the same	0	5	10
At London on the same	0	7	6

This disproportionate scale of charge applied equally to all articles of export as of import, of small bulk and great value, excepting the four articles before mentioned, in favor of which an exemption was in former times allowed, and to which, as extensive branches of trade, the Port is now to a great degree confined.

Under the conviction that so great and manifest an evil could not fail of receiving due consideration from the proper Authorities, this Board, in respectful but urgent terms, solicited the attention of the Common Council to the injurious effect which this mode of taxation produced upon the Commerce and Trade of the Port; and after a long and difficult negociation, broken off and subsequently renewed, the Board has, through the medium of Mr. Davis, concluded provisionally an arrangement tending to afford the city at large the relief sought; to an approval of which arrangement it has unanimously agreed, and in which it confidently relies on receiving the sanction of the Chamber, and the support and approval of the great body of the Citizens.

THE TERMS OF ARRANGEMENT

are as follow:

1st. That the amount of Town Dues for the use of the Corporation be limited to the sum of Four Thousand Pounds per Annum.

2nd. That for raising that sum a Package Rate shall be levied on Foreign Trade, to be paid equally by Freemen and Non-freemen.—The Shipping to be wholly exempted from Mayor's Dues.

3rd. That Ireland shall be considered as an integral part of the Kingdom, and exempted accordingly from the rate.

4th. That the endeavour shall be so to lay the rate as to leave a surplus above the £4000. which surplus shall form a Sinking Fund, for the redemption of the rate.

5th. That in case of a deficiency in any one year, such deficiency to be made up out of the Sinking Fund.

6th. A Schedule to be made by the Common Council to raise not less than £4000. per annum, by a Package Rate on Foreign Trade to and from Bristol; such Schedule to be published not later than two months after the Act has received the Royal Assent.

7th. That the Schedule may be altered in whole or in part by the Common Council, at any time during the first seven years after passing the Act.

8th. The alteration of the whole Schedule shall be to the effect of keeping the Collection effectual to the raising of £5000., viz. £4000. for the Revenue, and £1000. for a Sinking Fund, or for the purpose of diminishing the whole rate, should the collection much exceed the above sum.

9th. Partial alterations to be made for the convenience and advantage of the general trade; but in either case the alteration shall not take place until six months after the publication, in order to give timely notice to Foreign Correspondents trading with the Port.

10th. A Bill on this principle to be brought in by the Common Council, so soon as they shall be requested by the Chamber of Commerce and a respectable Body of their Fellow Citizens to do so; and that the Chamber of Commerce will support the same with its whole influence, and that the Society of Merchants and the Dock Company be invited also to give their sanction and support to the measure.

The Deputation from the Chamber of Commerce will transmit a Copy of this Paper to the Chamber, with their earnest recommendation that the proposition be acceded to by it.

Salopian Coffee-House, May 14, 1824.

(Signed)

Joseph Cookson, V.P.	John Mathew Gutch.
James Lean.	Geo. Eddie Sanders.
Robert Browne.	Samuel Harford.
John L. McAdam.	Thomas Reynolds.

To R. Hart Davis, Esq. M. P. &c. &c.

This Document, on being deposited with Mr. Davis, was verified by the Gentlemen deputed by the Common Council, who promised to lay the same before their Body at their earliest meeting, and to recommend its confirmation.

In giving its sanction to this arrangement, the Board feels that considerable progress has been made towards securing the means by

which the Commercial interests of the city may be relieved.

It will be observed,

That the *ad valorem* Duty is to be changed to a *Package* Rate of very *moderate* amount.

That the Town Dues on the *Coasting* and *Irish Trades* are to be *altogether* removed.

That the Mayor's Dues, to which *Freemen* as well as Non-freemen are liable, will be *totally abolished.*

That the *maximum* of receipt by the Corporation is *fixed.*

That a *Sinking Fund* is to be established for redeeming the charge altogether, and which, as it accumulates, will be applied in reducing from time to time the remaining imposts.

Lastly, that a Schedule is to be framed, which at the expiration of a certain period will *become fixed,* until reduced by the operation of the Sinking Fund.

In its endeavour to acquire for the Commercial interests of the city the means of entering into fair competition with those of more favored Ports the Board found considerable difficulty. It appeared, that the Commerce never could be restored until the charges were so far modified as to meet those of rival places; a reduction of even 50 per Cent. on the Town Dues collected under the present system, though it diminished the evil, would still have left its effect in operation; the documents before referred to shewing, that the disproportion in charge would still deter Non-freemen from making this Port their place of general business, and that the City would continue to suffer in those branches of Commerce which, in the present day, it is so much the wish of the Legislature and the inte-

rest of the Merchant to encourage, viz. that of Consignments on the account of the Foreign Correspondent and Shipments to his order—a trade which has contributed to raise this country to its present extent of commercial importance.

The Board does not assume the credit of having suggested the mode by which the difficulty is proposed to be obviated; it is satisfied with stating its unqualified approbation and its confident expectation of receiving, not only the sanction of the Chamber, but the concurrence of the Common Council, together with the approval and support of the Society of Merchants, the Dock Company, and of the whole community. To the Society of Merchants the Board is indebted for the first official suggestion of the principle, *as respects the removal of all distinction and the placing the whole Foreign Commerce of the Port upon a basis of equality;* and it cannot resist the opportunity of recalling on this occasion the attention of the Chamber to that part of the document comprising such suggestion, since it is unable in more appropriate or forcible terms to elucidate the principle of the alteration, whilst at the same time is afforded a reasonable expectation of the Board being met in full accordance with its views by the Society from whose Councils the document emanated.

The extract is taken from a Report and Memorial of the 8th day of March last, drawn up by the Committee of the Society of Merchants and presented to the Common Council, in reply to their requisition for an expression of opinion on the effects of the Local Taxation of the City.

[*This Extract was read to the Chamber, but the Board regrets that it cannot be here inserted; the Document having been delivered with a request from the Society of Merchants that it might not be published.*]

In addition to this unequivocal recognition of the principle by the Society of Merchants, an equally strong instance of accordance on the part of the Common Council can be adduced, independently of their sanction to the Arrangement by their Deputation in London, the principle having been adopted, and having continued in practice for years past. In favour of Wool, on which from the extent of import, the Dues as originally collected must have been a serious burthen, a Package Rate was substituted, and the whole import, whether the property of freemen or otherwise, has uniformly contributed without exemption, from the period at which the change took place. In further support of this principle, which the Board earnestly recommends to the adoption of the Chamber, may be adduced the example of his Majesty's Government, and the ready acquiescence of the country in the enlarged policy of their recent measures. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in moving for the re-appointment of a Committee on Foreign Trade, expressed himself to this effect:

"Valuable as all the measures to which he had been alluding had proved to the country, they were not more valuable than the declarations which they had elicited from the Government and from the House, of the real principles on which they thought the British Commerce ought to rest; namely, that they ought to get rid of the old restrictive system of Commerce, and to adopt one more liberal in its nature, and more beneficial to the intercourse of foreign nations with this country."

In proceeding to consider the *effect* which it is conceived the proposed alteration may produce, the Board is gratified with the prospect

of extensive and universal good, without prejudice to established interests. The Board cannot feel that by the arrangement either injustice or injury is offered to the Free Burgess, or that his interests will be unduly compromised; on the contrary, when the Board considers, that those only, who import from or export to foreign countries, can entertain the least prejudice; that they alone of the great body of the Burgesses will be liable to any charge; that the share which will fall to the lot of each individual will be small; that its amount will be governed by the extent of business transacted; that the specified sum for the revenue of the Common Council will be raised from all the Foreign Commerce of the Port generally; that under the operation of this freedom and release from the destructive imposts, business must increase; that the Commission Trade will be opened, the Mayors Dues abolished, the Coasting and Irish Trade wholly freed from any municipal impost;—with these powerful considerations, the Board cannot suppose that any Burgess will allow his individual interest in respect of the small share he may have to contribute upon his portion of the whole Foreign Trade of the Port, to weigh against the manifest advantage the city at large will derive from this restoration to a wholesome and free Commerce.

Though the Board thus fairly urges the point to the favorable consideration of the Chamber, upon general and broad principles of commercial policy, yet it would also place its claims, or rather those of the city at large, upon the individual interest and advantages of the Burgesses themselves. The general benefits which must accrue from this arrangement, and from others on minor points which will necessarily follow the example of liberality and good policy,

will, the Board feels, be numerous and important. To all classes of the community who are not immediately importers or exporters on their own account, a decided benefit must result without any countervailing disadvantage. The manufacturer will have a market more amply supplied in which to purchase his raw material; he will also have an increased demand for his manufactured articles, forming an assorted cargo on equally eligible terms with other ports; the newly opened Indian and South American trades, consisting principally of consignments, now become very important branches of commerce, and from which other ports are deriving immense advantages, need not be longer excluded; the party dependant on shipping will benefit by the additional number of vessels that will, upon equal terms, be disposed to seek the advantages the harbour affords; the party connected with the coasting trade and the supply of our neighboring sea-port towns and their adjacent districts will find coasting vessels more frequently and regularly plying, by which, he will be able more surely to warrant a delivery of his goods, and reap the advantage of his locality; thus meeting fairly the distant trader, who now under the pressure of the existing disadvantages intrudes and often succeeds in places far out of the range of his natural sphere; the general shopkeeper must indirectly feel the benefit which an impulse and energy to trade will impart; whilst the mechanic and labourer, dependant upon the success of the manufacturer and tradesman, will derive, in constant and regular employment, a share of the advantages their masters in full measure experience. The house proprietor will find the value of his property enhanced by an increased demand for occupation or purchase; the professions

will feel the benefit of extended commerce in the influx of strangers and the increase of new establishments;—in truth, all classes, of whatever rank or in whatever station, will participate in the general improvement.

The free Burgess, who will be now required in common with the others, to pay upon his imports and exports (for by him alone can any possible objection be raised) may perhaps consider, that these advantages will not be procured without a sacrifice on his part; the Board is aware that on the first view of the arrangement such may appear to be the case. In the accomplishment of a great public object some private interests must be partially affected, and each must be required to bear a share of sacrifice. On the completion of this arrangement, the Common Council will be entitled to the credit of having relinquished part of their revenue. It should be recollected by every Burgess who may object to the sharing an equal liability with the Non-freeman, that the Common Council have the power of extending the benefit of exemption to all the trading commonalty, by granting freedoms at nominal prices, and that such a measure, whilst it would be no infraction of any right which a free Burgess may feel he possesses, would yet effectually deprive him of all his present advantage in, and the only valuable part of, his privilege as connected with the present question. It would be unreasonable in the Burgess to expect, that the present defective and partial system of receipt could have continued; a more accurate and sure mode of distinguishing between the property of the Freeman and his Foreign Correspondent must have been devised, and some new regulations adopted, an exemption from the effect and trouble of which, would, the Board feels, be cheaply pur-

chased at the price of the small package rate which the commodities will, as now proposed, be liable to bear; nor is this the only consideration to the Burgess for taking the proposed share of burthen—the Board would add, the prospect of extending his own peculiar business, the advantages of a general Commission Trade, the extention of the Warehousing an Bonding system, and the general benefit an increase of commerce cannot fail to produce.

It is the opinion of the Board that the continuance of a heavy tax upon the intercourse of strangers with the Port is contrary to every correct principle of political economy; that it is destructive of Commerce, and highly injurious to all classes, both Burgesses and others; that the privilege of exemption so much valued is of itself a positive evil to the Burgess, since the neighbouring Manufacturers are induced to make their shipments through more distant channels, and since by excluding strangers, and compelling them to form establishments under more liberal auspices, the particular trades are limited, the spirit and energy of extensive dealing is destroyed, and a contracted narrow system of Commerce prevails in place of the more liberal and extensive scale of rival Ports. In these disadvantages the Burgess with others equally suffers, and in obviating them and thus securing a general public advantage, each individual will receive his full share of benefit;—the Board therefore, in every point of view, feels justified in recommending the arrangement strongly to the approval of the Chamber and the public at large, in the confident assurance that all classes must derive benefit, that no one individual can eventually sustain injury or loss.

Having fully explained the *principles* on which it recommends the proposed Arrange-

ment to the approval of the Chamber, and the *effect* which, if adopted, would probably be produced, the Board leaves the subject for attentive and full consideration.

The Board is happy in the opportunity of recognizing the cordial support it has received from the inhabitants of the several towns and manufacturing districts connected with the city; the zeal with which the important subject was met, and the many valuable friends the Board found calls for particular observation. The Board is also highly indebted to many highly respected and influential Members of Parliament for the attention paid to its representations. Of the anxiety evinced by Mr. DAVIS and Mr. CHARLES DUNDAS, of their judgment in the arduous office of Mediators, of their exertions in effecting the arrangement, the Board cannot express its sense of obligation in sufficiently strong terms; nor can the Board conclude their Report without acknowledging the essential services it has derived from the Committee on Local Taxation and the several Gentlemen forming the Deputation in London; to whose united moderation and perseverance may be attributed, in a great degree, the present happy prospect of attaining the object the Board has diligently pursued, with the additional satisfaction of having restored a better feeling with the public Bodies, of having removed, as the Board hopes, every jealousy with which the measures of the Chamber may have been viewed, and of having formed a basis on which a kindlier understanding may be founded, and on which its intercourse may be henceforward conducted with mutual and unreserved confidence and esteem.

At the Commercial Rooms,
1*st July* 1824.

AT a MEETING of the CHAMBER of COMMERCE specially convened to receive a REPORT from the BOARD of DIRECTORS, upon the Arrangement entered into provisionally by the Deputation from the Board of Directors with the Deputation from the Common Council, and to take the terms of such arrangement into consideration,

THOMAS STOCK, Esq. V. P.
IN THE CHAIR.

The Report having been read, it was moved by J. S. HARFORD, Esq. seconded by THOS. KINGTON, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously,*

That the Report now read be received and approved, and that the Board of Directors be requested to adopt all further measures for concluding, on the part of the Chamber, the arrangement provisionally entered into with the Deputation of the Common Council, and for carrying the same into effect.

It was moved by SAMUEL HARFORD, Esq. seconded by JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously,*

That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to R. H. DAVIS, Esq. for his exertions; and to the several other Members of Parliament who have interested themselves on behalf of the Chamber, for their attention and support.

It was moved by H. O. WILLS, Esq. seconded by HENRY BUSH, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously,*

That the Report, with the Resolutions now passed, be printed and distributed under the direction of the Board.

THOMAS STOCK, V. P.
CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman having left the Chair, a Resolution, conveying to him the Thanks of the Meeting, was unanimously passed.

LIONEL BIGG, SECRETARY.

REPORT

OF

A COMMITTEE OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

Bristol Chamber of Commerce,

UPON THE

EXPEDIENCY AND PRACTICABILITY

OF ESTABLISHING

BOATS PROPELLED BY STEAM,

FOR TOWING VESSELS

FROM THE

Floating-Harbour of the Port of Bristol

INTO THE

BRISTOL CHANNEL,

As presented to the Board on the 1st *of November* 1824.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL-STREET.

1824.

REPORT.

In obedience to the instructions of the Board your Committee has proceeded upon the enquiry into the expediency and practicability of establishing Boats propelled by Steam, for towing Vessels from the Floating Harbour into the Bristol Channel.

The Committee has applied itself to the consideration of the following points:—

Firstly.—To what extent the existing disadvantages in the Navigation of the River are experienced, and whether they would be removed by the introduction of the proposed Boats, and what additional facilities to the Shipping Interests would be thereby afforded.

Secondly.—What description of Boats, in point of size, power of machinery, and particular construction, would be best adapted; and whether such Boats should be of a limited size, and supersede both Horses and Tow Boats, not extending their range beyond the Holmes, unless under especial circumstances; or whether they should be of a larger description, and being attached at a lower point of the River, where the Horses can no longer be applied, should proceed thence down the Channel as far as Lundy, and if wanted, serve more than one Ship for a certain distance.

Thirdly.—What number of Boats would be necessary to supply the present Commerce of the Port, if the improvement were generally

adopted; and what the difference of expence to the Mercantile Interest would probably be, as compared with that of the present system.

Fourthly.—To what extent the proposed measure would be likely to affect prejudicially the Pilots and the population of Pill.

Upon the first section of enquiry, your Committee believes it will be universally admitted, that the Port still labours under considerable disadvantages; that serious accidents have in some instances occurred; that inconvenience, disappointment, and considerable expence are not unfrequently experienced. These disadvantages are to be attributed chiefly to the sinuosities in the natural course of the River; the confined space of the Channel; the shallowness of the water over the Swash; the interruptions in the line of Towing-path; the Ships being for a great distance dependent on the Tow Boats, oftentimes insufficiently appointed; the delay in accomplishing the passage, and consequent risk; the want of sufficient power for enabling Ships to contend against even moderately adverse winds, or under some circumstances, to move with safety at Neap tides; the risk from squalls of wind in their progress, with other impediments to the safe ingress and egress of Vessels at all times, which though only occasionally felt, are oftentimes productive of serious loss, and are difficulties the removal or remedying of which would be highly desirable. Many of these disadvantages might, in the opinion of your Committee, be altogether removed, and others be materially corrected, by the introduction of Boats propelled by Steam; whilst by the celerity in accomplishing the passage to and from the Channel, by the means of increas-

ing the applicable power in cases of accident, of proceeding to or from Kingroad under circumstances, which, with the present system would be altogether impossible; and with the opportunity also of extending the range of such assistance as far as, or possibly below, the Holmes, so many important facilities would be afforded, that the measure would not only add greatly to the convenience and security of those engaged in the Shipping Interests, but would tend materially to encourage the general trade of the Port.

In determining on the particular construction of Boat which should be recommended, its size and power of machinery, your Committee has been governed by a desire of combining together three essential objects, viz.—The utmost extent of improvement in the system of our River Navigation—the making such improvement applicable to all the different classes of Shipping, in order to the measure being of general utility—and the rendering the facilities at a rate of charge within the general average of expence now incurred. In this view your Committee is induced the rather to prefer a Boat strongly built, having a round stern lying low in the water, in size 100 tons carpenter's tonnage, and supplied with two Engines, each of thirty-horse power, the Engines being placed nearer the prow than in the ordinary class of vessels. Such a vessel might ply to and from the Basin and Kingroad, or to the Holmes, and even lower if required, and would, your Committee believes, be of sufficient power to contend against all ordinary impediments, be found of the class most generally useful, and would be competent to extraordinary, as well as ordinary purposes.

A smaller vessel of less power, your Committee cannot recommend. It will be essential to have at all times some power in reserve; the weight of the vessel in tow will reduce proportionably the speed of the Boat; adverse winds or tide must also occasionally be contended with, and at particular times, when Ships have accumulated in the Basin from a prevalence of contrary winds or violent weather, it may be necessary, on several desiring to put to sea by the same tide, to afford to each some assistance by taking each in tow from below Broad Pill, for a short distance, either by one or more at a time; thus enabling a given number to make a safe passage as by experience may be found practicable: in all these cases the extra power capable of being applied will add to the utility and advantage of the establishment.

The rate of charge at which the Boats might be rendered to the public will depend on the degree of encouragement the measure receives. Should the class of vessels before recommended be found generally useful, and should the Commercial Interests derive the degree of advantage which the improvement is expected to afford, a general employment may be fairly calculated upon. In this event, your Committee is induced to hope, that the rate of charge may without difficulty be brought within the average of the present expense, and at the same time afford to the individuals supplying the means for perfecting the undertaking, as fair a degree of remuneration as ought to be expected from a Scheme in which public as well as private interests must necessarily be consulted. In confirmation of this view your Committee subjoins three Calculations: the *first* shewing the amount

which, according to the best information, is supposed to be now paid by the Shipping Interests for Tow Boats and Horses only, exclusive of Channel Pilotage, and excluding all Vessels below 100 tons, with the average rate of payment by each class of such Vessels. The *second** shewing the amount which would be required to support a Boat of the kind recommended; and the *third* the comparative expense of the present and proposed system.

The number of Vessels required to supply the purposes of the Port will depend on the extent to which the improvement will be adopted, and the state of trade. In the first instance, the Committee would recommend the experiment being tried with one Boat, to the end that by gradually effecting the change, the trade may accommodate itself by degrees to the alteration, and the interests involved in the present system have opportunity for adapting themselves to the new circumstances as they may progressively arise.

Your Committee is encouraged to believe, the establishment of the proposed Steam Boats will not be so injurious to the Pilots and Inhabitants of Pill, as on the first view of the subject might be supposed. Considerable time must

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* In this Calculation, no duty beyond Kingroad is included. The Boat would be then ready, if required, to carry the Ship an additional distance at a fair degree of remuneration. Independently of the anticipated saving of expense, the opportunity of securing to Vessels at the instant they may be ready to sail, a safe and accelerated passage to Kingroad, and of affording assistance to the Holmes, or even lower if required, will, of itself, be a manifest advantage over the present system, and will, it is believed, insure to the establishment the degree of employment calculated upon. The value of the improvement in this respect by the economy of time cannot be inconsiderable, since well authenticated instances may be adduced, of vessels which have reached the Holmes, having made the voyage to the West-Indies before others, not availing themselves of the particular opportunity, have been enabled to leave Kingroad.

elapse before an improvement of the kind proposed, contending with long-established usage, with the natural prejudice against novelty, and the doubt of its positive advantage, will be generally adopted. During this period the Pilots' Tow Boats, by not being renewed, and by being applied to other purposes which may arise, will become reduced in number, and the parties be enabled to protect themselves against any serious loss in this respect. The efficient population may find employment in the Merchants' Ships, thereby improving their condition, in exchanging a service of precarious employment and remuneration, for one of certainty in both respects; whilst those, who may be unfit for active service, will be still required for the navigation of the smaller class of vessels, and for that part of the general business with which the improvement cannot interfere. Fisheries also might give employment to a part of the efficient population.

Upon a review of all the points connected with the subject, your Committee is of opinion, that Boats propelled by Steam for towing vessels may be introduced with advantage to the Public; and if fairly and liberally encouraged, may, under proper management, yield an adequate return to the individuals supplying the funds for forming the establishment.

Your Committee suggests, as connected with this subject, that, at an inconsiderable expense, an improvement in the Channel of the River might be effected, by deepening its course for a short distance near the first projecting point below the Hotwell House, and in cutting and rounding that point for a few feet, so as to render the turning the less acute.

In concluding this Report, your Committee would observe, that Steam Boats for towing and for carriage of goods have been introduced

extensively and successfully in many Ports. On the Clyde, there are numerous Boats employed solely in plying between Grenock and Glasgow; at Liverpool, London, Hull, Newcastle, as well as other Ports, Steam Boats for towing are found particularly useful.

Your Committee therefore, upon information obtained from the most authentic sources, after communicating with many individuals well acquainted with the subject and with the localities of the Port, and after giving mature consideration to the advantages as well as disadvantages which are likely to result, and to the arguments for and against the measure as applied to our River Navigation, feels itself justified in reporting to the Board, that in its view, the measure is practicable, and is also expedient for enabling the City to keep pace with other Ports in improvement of system, and in affording facilities and advantages to its Commercial and Trading Interests.

FIRST CALCULATION.

Amount estimated as paid on Vessels frequenting the Port of Bristol for Tow Boats and Horses only, exclusive of Channel Pilotage, and not including those below 100 *Tons; taken on an average of favorable as well as unfavorable circumstances, distinguishing the amount as applying to each particular class of Vessels.—Viz.*

UPON VESSELS OF

400 Tons	and upwards...	£16.	per Trip or Passage.
300	ditto	£14.	ditto.
250	ditto	£11.	ditto.
200	ditto	£10.	ditto.
150	ditto	£6.	ditto.
100	ditto	£3.	ditto.

Estimating the expence upon all Vessels of 100 Tons and upwards to average £9.—on Three Hundred Ships arriving and the same number leaving the Port in One Year, making together Six Hundred Trips or Passages, the amount annually paid would be £5400.

SECOND CALCULATION.

Shewing the Amount required to support a Steam Boat of the size and kind recommended.

First Cost of a Vessel of 100 Tons, Carpenter's measure, supplied with Two Engines each of Thirty Horse power will be—viz.

	£.	s.	d.
Engines	2,350	0	0
The Hull £10. 10*s.* per Ton, and allowing £200. Anchors, Cables, and Appointments	1,250	0	0
First Cost.....	3,600	0	0

Annual maintenance exclusive of Coals, viz.

One Master	£1.	10*s.*	per week.
Engineer	£2.	5*s.*	ditto.
Fireman	£1.	1*s.*	ditto.
Three Men at 15*s.*	£2.	5*s.*	ditto.
	£7.	1*s.*	per week.
	52		
£366. 12*s.*			

	366	12	0
Add wear, tear, depreciation and profit 25 per Cent. on first Cost £3600.....	900	0	0
Amount to be raised for Annual Maintenance exclusive of cost of Coal	1,266	12	0
Divided by 12, brings per Month.....	105	11	0

Expence of Coal, viz.

	£.	s.	d.			
Cost of Coal per Trip, allowing 6 hours for a Trip and 2½ Tons Coal for Consumption at 15*s.* per Ton	1	17	6			
Tallow, Oil, &c. per Trip.....	0	2	6			
	2	0	0			
Calculating the employment of the vessel to be 20 Trips per month or one-third of the work she is capable of performing			20			
Monthly expence of Coal, &c....	40	0	0	40	0	0
Add Monthly expence of Maintenance as above, and of wear, tear, &c.				105	11	0
			20	145	11	0
Divide by 20, is per Trip				£7	5	6

THIRD CALCULATION.

Shewing the comparative Expence of the present and proposed system.

	£.	s.	d.
Expence of the present system on all Vessels of 100 Tons and upwards, which may be taken at an average per Trip or Passage of	9	0	0
Expence of proposed system according to the like average	7	5	6
Balance in favor of the proposed measure per Trip or Passage	1	14	6

ADRIAN MOENS,
CHAIRMAN.

October 27, 1824.

At a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held the 1st day of November, 1824:

THOMAS STOCK, Esq. V.P. in the Chair.

The foregoing Report having been presented and read, *It was Resolved,*

Firstly.—That the Report be received and approved, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Committee.

Secondly.—That a Copy of the Report be transmitted to each of the following Bodies, viz. the Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Dock Company, with a request that they will favor the Board with their opinion on the subject at their earliest convenience, and if the object should receive their approval, will afford their co-operation and support to the Individuals or Company that may engage in the proposed establishment.

Thirdly.—That the thanks of this Board be given to the Members of the Committee, and to the several Gentlemen who have contributed information on the subject.

(Signed) THOMAS STOCK,
Chairman.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Board of Directors

TO

A GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 31*st day of January,* 1825,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOM, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL-STREET.

1825.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT, &c.

Your Board of Directors proposes to lay before you a full detail of its proceedings during the past year.

It would have been to your Board a subject of peculiar gratification to have reported, that the important object of ameliorating the Local Taxation of the Port, to which the unremitted attention of your Board has been directed, and in which the welfare of the City is materially involved, had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion: the disappointment in this respect, after the time and exertions which have been devoted and the advanced state of adjustment to which the subject had been brought, your Board sensibly feels; it however enjoys the satisfaction of having convinced the Common Council of the necessity of some specific relief being afforded, of having reduced the points in question to a defined and narrow limit, and of having made considerable progress towards the ultimate attainment of your purpose.

Your Board will submit the whole series of documents and transactions which have reference to this interesting part of its duties, in the confident reliance, that all information being before you, and your judgment being formed upon the

real merits, you will approve the course which has been pursued.

Other subjects affecting the Commercial Interests of the Port have received the consideration of your Board, and in particular a plan for facilitating the Navigation of the River by the introduction of Steam Boats for towing Vessels from the Floating Harbour into the Bristol Channel. In a report made on the 1st Nov. last, and transmitted to the Members of the Chamber, will be found the result of a patient and extended investigation into the advantages anticipated from the proposed improvement, and your Board impressed with a firm belief of the eligibility and practicability of the plan, transmitted copies of its report to the Common Council, and the Society of Merchant Venturers, requesting from each Body the favor of an opinion on the subject at their earliest convenience, and if the object should receive their approval, their co-operation and support to the individuals who might engage in the proposed establishment. From each of these Bodies communications have been received expressive of an earnest desire to approve any measure which may give facility to trade, and your Board is sanguine in the expectation of the enquiry, upon further consideration, being productive of a beneficial result.

The attention of your Board has been likewise called to the claim by his Majesty's Board of Excise for Duties on deficiencies in Rums for exportation, on strength under proof.—Memorials have been transmitted and presented, which are now under consideration by the Government authorities. Communications have been opened with Commercial Institutions at several principal Cities and Ports, and also with

the Ship Owners' Society, and Public Offices in London.—The several Bills introduced in the last Session, so far as they have been likely to affect the peculiar interests of the City or of Commerce in general, have received consideration ; and the important Bills for regulating the Customs, and which will be discussed in the next Session, are now before a Committee of your Board for examination and report.

Your Board has likewise rendered its assistance in an application to the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury, respecting the regulations of the Customs, with reference to the Shipment of Goods carried Coastwise, and the necessity of Sufferances. Some of these restrictions are, your Board has the pleasure to announce, now removed, under the following Treasury Minute.

"*Treasury Chambers, 5th January*, 1825.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Having laid before the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury your Report of the 11th ult. on a Petition from the Merchants and Traders engaged in the Coasting Trade, and in the Shipment of Goods carried on the Rivers Severn and Wye, praying relief in regard to Entry and Sufferances required of Vessels in that trade;

"I have it in command from their Lordships to desire, you will dispense with Coast Documents for all Goods shipped in vessels regularly trading between the several Ports of the Severn Eastward of the Holmes, except Corn, *Bonded* Goods, Coals, Culm, Cinders, Slates, and any articles liable to Coast Duty, as proposed in your said Report, such permission to be continued until the pleasure of Parliament shall be ascertained in regard to the proposed Bill for the Regulation of the Customs. "I am, &c.

"GEO. HARRISON.

"*To the Commissioners of Customs.*"

The important object of securing relief to the Mercantile Interests of the Port from the

prejudicial effects of the Town and Mayor's Dues, has been pursued with diligence and anxiety. At the period of presenting the last Annual Report, your Board had confined its proceedings to the collecting evidence to establish the extent of injury which the Trade and Commerce of the Port sustained, by the undue weight and partiality of these imposts; to the submitting such evidence to the Common Council, with four successive Memorials, requesting their early attention and for general relief; and to the presentation of a Memorial and Statement of Facts to the President and Board of Council for Trade and Foreign Plantations; all of which documents are stated at length in the last Annual Report.

To this point your proceedings had arrived at the period of the last Annual Meeting, when after approving of the firm, temperate, and conciliatory conduct pursued in the several communications with the Common Council, you requested a continuance of exertion in the same important undertaking, and in support resolved to raise a Fund by subscription.

In obedience to this resolution, your Board has steadily proceeded. A Report of the 18th February last, contains the particulars and result of the interview with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer and President of the Board of Trade favored the Members of a Deputation from your Board. In the Report of the 13th March is comprised the Bill brought into Parliament by the Common Council, by which they proposed to acquire the right to reduce, alter, modify, and regulate the Tolls and Duties, without pledging themselves to any extent of reduction, or to the period when any reduction should commence, and in which

they reserved the right of again raising to any amount, not exceeding the existing assessment, any of the Tolls which might be so reduced. To this Bill your Board was under the necessity of offering some objections: in the first instance, requesting that the legal right should not receive any confirmation, (and to which point the Common Council conditionally assented,) and submitting that the commencement of the proposed reduction should be defined, the extent of such reduction and alteration settled by a Schedule for that purpose, and without being made subject to any future increase. By a further Report of the 7th April it will be perceived, that the Common Council refused their assent to these two propositions; upon which your Board, impressed with the importance of adhering to its requisition, renewed its urgent solicitations to the Common Council for a reconsideration of their resolution, repeating it's sincere regret at the Common Council having declined all personal communication. To these resolutions the Common Council determined that no reply was necessary, and finding that ultimately their plan might be opposed, they determined upon relinquishing all further prosecution of their Bill. At this stage of the proceedings your Board, after protesting against the resolutions of relinquishing the Bill, was still anxious to evince its desire of obtaining an amicable adjustment of differences, and with this feeling, notwithstanding the abrupt termination of the negociation, and the refusal of all conference, submitted to the Common Council on the 9th of April, a distinct proposition to the following effect, viz. "That the Bill of the Common Council would meet the approbation of this Board, if altered so as to enact—that the

Dues payable as Town and Mayor's Dues should cease from and after the 29th Sept. then next, from which time the rates specified in a Schedule to be annexed, should be made absolutely payable to the Corporation, with power nevertheless to vary them in its discretion within the limits under proper restrictions."

"That by the Schedule a Package Rate should be universally substituted for the *ad valorem* tax, and that the rates payable at Liverpool on goods exported and imported to and from foreign parts, should form the basis and maximum of such Schedule, subject to a variation in cases where from local circumstances it might be considered desirable."

"That any surplus raised by the above rates beyond £ per annum should be placed to the credit of a Fund for the redemption of the Dues, which should be redeemable at year's purchase; the account of such Fund to be annually published."

"The Board submitted it's proposal without any intention to preclude any counter proposal which might proceed from the Common Council, and with a willingness to enter upon a conference on the subject."

To this proposition, and the other proceedings reported, your Board had the satisfaction of receiving your entire sanction and approbation; and all hope of procuring a conference with the Common Council being abandoned, and the expectation of an amicable adjustment being much weakened, your Board was instructed to adopt such steps as might be advised, for bringing the subject under discussion and enquiry before a Committee of the House of Commons, either by continuing the Bill or otherwise, and to pursue all further

measures whereby the relief sought for might be attained.

The prosecution of the Bill brought into Parliament by the Common Council being considered as not calculated for the attainment of the object in view, your Board, under advice, determined upon presenting to Parliament a Petition for general enquiry into the Municipal Imposts, in the expectation of the relief required being produced; accordingly a Deputation from your Board, consisting of many of it's most active and intelligent Members, proceeded to London; of whose proceedings your Board deems it right to lay before you a full detail in the following Document, addressed to Charles Dundas, Esq. and in the minutes of the Members of the Deputation, drawn up and returned to your Board as their Report; Mr. Davis having previously examined and authenticated such minutes.

"*Salopian Coffee-House*, 10*th May* 1824.

"To Charles Dundas, Esq. M.P. London.

"The Chamber of Commerce of Bristol, of which Body we are a Deputation, have directed us to make no proposition to the Deputation of the Common Council of the City now in London, but to be ready to receive with respect and attention any proposition that may come from those gentlemen.

"We are so directed, in consequence of an official intimation from the Common Council to the Chamber, that they had abandoned the Bill which they had brought into Parliament for the relief of the Trade of the Port, but though obliged by our instructions to abstain from making propositions, we are yet not unwilling to lay before you our individual opinion of what we conceive would be essential for obtaining that relief.

"Such relief being the object of all parties, we request the favour of you not to consider us as opponents of the Common Council, but as a Body sincerely desirous to unite our best endeavours with their's for such a regulation of charges as may be most for the interest of the port and the kingdom at large.

"The Common Council of Bristol keep secret their accounts; it is not, therefore, in our power, accurately to state the amount at present produced by the Town and Mayor's Dues; but if the Deputation of the Common Council will state a definite sum that will sastisfy them in lieu of these Dues, and if they will favour us with a schedule by which the amount is to be apportioned on the various articles of Commerce by a *Package Rate*, we shall be most ready to lay before the Deputation our opinion, how far it would probably have the effect of relieving the port, and restoring that communication with strangers from which at present it is unfortunately obstructed and debarred.

"In submitting such opinion the Deputation of the Chamber will only attend, to what it shall consider to be for the general interest; the question is not what will be satisfactory to the Deputation, or to any body of individuals, but what will place the Commerce and Trade of the Port on a fair footing of competition with other Ports; and the Deputation submit to you with deference, that the Chamber has no interest separate from the Common Council; that body are in their corporate capacity by far the largest landed proprietors in the City of Bristol; they are Lords of the Manor of Bristol, and are in receipt of all the Market Tolls; these rents and profits, by the depression of commerce, must be diminished; the oppressive extent of the Town and Mayor's Dues must also operate to the diminution of these sources of revenue; they can, therefore, collectively or individually, have no interest unconnected with that of their fellow citizens.

"The Deputation wish it to be understood, therefore, that they present themselves to you not as opponents, but as having an united interest with the Common Council in obtaining such an arrangement as may promote the public welfare.

"We have the honour to subscribe ourselves,

"Sir,

"Your obliged humble Servants,

(Signed) "Joseph Cookson, Vice-President.
"J. L. McAdam.
"J. M. Gutch.
"Saml. Harford.
"James Lean."

MINUTES OF DEPUTATION.

The Members of the Deputation of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, in compliance with the requisition of the Committee on Local Taxation, return the following as the substance of their Minutes taken at the time of such part of their Proceedings in London, as relate to the negociation with the Deputation of the Common Council, and to the arrangement entered into provisionally with such Deputation, and of their conclusions thereon.

JOSEPH COOKSON, V. P.
Chairman of Deputation.

"The Deputation apprehend that they need not recur to proceedings anterior to the 10th May, on which day certain verbal propositions for an arrangement of the subjects in dispute were made from the Deputation of the Common Council to the Deputation of the Chamber of Commerce, through the medium of Charles Dundas, Esq. M. P. with the privity of R. H. Davis, Esq.; the nature of which, and the reasons of the latter Deputation for declining to accede to them, are fully explained in the following Document, addressed to each of those Gentlemen on the morning of the following day, the 11th of May.

"*Salopian Coffee-House, 11th May*, 1824.

"SIR,

"The Deputation from the Chamber of Commerce, most anxious as they are, and ever have been, to avail themselves of any opening which might lead to an amicable adjustment of the differences between themselves and the Common Council, particulary when that opportunity is afforded them, through the medium of such respectable individuals as yourself and Mr. Charles Dundas, deferred last evening to your recommendation, to consider the proposition made to them from the Common Council through you.

"The proposition being only verbal, is in the opinion of this Deputation very objectionable, and it consequently partook of that vagueness of terms, which such communications always convey.

"A reduction of about 50 ℔ Cent. upon the non-favored articles, and the production of the Schedule on the 29th September, appear to have been the simple terms of the proposition; but as they were only such terms, as had before been offered and rejected by the Chamber, and as the Common Council persist in retaining in the Bill the objectionable power of again raising the rates to the present extent, and recurring to the *ad valorem* charge, at their pleasure;—This Deputation, after maturely weighing the proposition, consider it so widely apart from the expectations of the Chamber, and the instructions under which the Deputation are acting, that they hesitate not to say, they cannot accede to them.

"The Deputation, therefore, have resolved to proceed with the presentation of the Petitions entrusted to them.

"I have the honor to remain, for the Deputation,

"Sir,

"Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON.

"*To R. H. Davis, Esq. M. P.*"

"*Copy to Charles Dundas, Esq. M. P.*"

"From the 11th of May to the 13th, the undersigned were principally engaged in procuring support for the two Petitions which had been placed in the hands of Sir Thomas Acland for presentation.

"Of the intention of Sir Thomas Acland to present these Petitions, and of the day on which they were to be presented, due notice was given to Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright, and by one or both of these Gentlemen to the Deputation from the Common Council.

"On the 13th May, when the Private Committees of the House of Commons were breaking up, Mr. Davis met Mr. Mc Adam and Mr. Gutch in one of the Committee Rooms of the House, and requested them to collect together immediately the other Gentlemen of the Deputation, in the hope that the propositions he had to submit (as from himself), might be such as to meet their approbation, and induce them to withhold the presentation of the Petitions. Mr. Davis then stated verbally to the Deputation the outline of the propositions, subsequently committed to writing, and after several communications had passed between the

two Deputations, through the medium of Mr. Davis, it was agreed that the presentations of the Petitions should be withheld; and Sir Thomas Acland, who had entered the Lobby of the House with the Petitions under his arm, was recalled. The undersigned adjourned to the Salopian Coffee-House, in order to reduce into writing the proposed terms; and Mr. Davis having shortly afterward joined them at the Salopian, the following, as heads of the proposed arrangement, were then drawn up and signed; and Mr. Davis obligingly undertook to transmit them immediately to the Deputation from the Common Council, and promised to bring their reply on the following morning.

"*Salopian Coffee-House*, 13*th May*, 1824.

"Mr. Davis made a suggestion to the Deputation from the Chamber of Commerce, which he promised also to make to the Deputation from the Common Council, to the following effect—

"That the amount be limited to the Sum of Four Thousand Pounds per Annum.

"That for raising that Sum, a Package Rate shall be levied on Foreign Trade, to be paid equally by Freemen and Non-Freemen; the Shipping to be wholly exempt from Mayor's dues.

"That Ireland shall be considered as an integral part of the kingdom, and exempted accordingly from the Tax.

"That the endeavour shall be so to lay the Rate, as to leave a Surplus above the £4000. which Surplus shall form a Sinking Fund for the redemption of the Rate.

"But in case of a deficiency in any one year, such deficiency to be made up out of the Sinking Fund.

"A Bill on this principle to be brought in by the Common Council, and to be supported by the Chamber of Commerce with their whole influence; and that the Society of Merchants and the Dock Company be invited also to give their support to the Bill, which is to be brought in the next Session of Parliament. (Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON."

"On the morning of the 14th May, Mr. Davis accordingly brought the reply, and stated several objections as having been made by the Deputation from the Common Council to the terms of the preceding evening, and

proposing an article for a requisition from the Chamber of Commerce and a respectable body of the Citizens, to bring a Bill into Parliament to carry the propositions into effect, should be substituted for that article which had previously stipulated for the Common Council doing so of their own accord. Mr. Davis stated, that their reason for wishing this alteration to be made was, that as the Common Council were in the habit of receiving from the Citizens premiums for privileges of exemption from the Town and Mayor's dues, which privileges would cease with the intended Bill, it would not be decorous for the measure to originated with them; but that they not only consented to such a proposition, but had promised him that they would use their influence to prevail upon their Body to consent to the measure, [and to influence also their connections amongst their Fellow Citizens out of the Body.]* The undersigned acceded to this alteration, considering that the principle of the object to be attained, and not the precise form of attaining it, was of the most essential importance; that it was intended the Burgesses should, under any circumstances, have been applied to for concurrence; and influenced by the assurance, more than once repeated by Mr. Davis, that he was convinced the other Deputation were sincere in their wish, that the propositions so altered might be carried into effect.

"It had previously been enquired of Mr. Davis, what powers the Deputation from the Common Council possessed, to enable them to agree to the terms, to which Mr. Davis replied, that they as well as ourselves, were bound to submit them for the approval or non-approval of the Bodies by whom they were deputed, and that the two Deputations therefore stood upon equal terms.

"Enquiry was also made of Mr. Davis, as to the pledge he could obtain from the Common Council Deputation, for their carrying into effect any arrangement which might be entered into, they having declined any personal conference with the undersigned. Mr. Davis replied, that he should, for his own justification, as well as for our satisfaction, take care to have such a guarantee, signed and placed in his hands, which would bind both

* Upon the section of the sentence within the brackets, Mr. Davis added the following note.—"I do not feel confident as to this expression, because Mr. Alderman Fripp stated, that he should not bind himself, as an individual, to support the propositions."—*R. H. D.*

parties to the fulfilment of the arrangement about to be entered into; and that in case of his decease, it would be found amongst his papers.

"The negociation however, even at this period, was nearly broken off, by Mr. Davis informing the undersigned, that the Deputation from the Common Council required an article to be inserted in the propositions, allowing them the uncontrouled power of raising and altering the Rates, &c. as was inserted in the Bill which they had brought into Parliament. This the undersigned positively objected to; and at Mr. Davis's suggestion, the difficulty was obviated, by the insertion of articles 6 and 7, in the terms ultimately agreed upon.

"Further enquiry was made of Mr. Davis, when it was probable that the Deputation from the Common Council would submit the terms to their Committee, and also when a confirmation of them by the Common Council at large might be expected. Mr. Davis replied, that they had informed him, they did not think it necessary, as the Bill was not to be brought into Parliament till the next Session, to call a Special Meeting of their whole Body; that they would, immediately on their return, lay their proceedings before the Committee by whom they were delegated to act, and as a Quarterly Meeting of the whole Body would take place in due course in the early part of the ensuing month of June,* they would then have an opportunity of taking it's sense upon the proposed arrangement.

"Influenced by these promises and assurances, satisfied that the terms were the most eligible that could be obtained for the general interests of the City, and animated by the hope that the basis of an arrangement had been agreed upon with the cordial approbation and concurrence of each party, and that each Deputation would endeavour to the utmost of it's power as well to advance the preliminary steps, as to promote whatever ulterior proceedings might be necessary to be taken by each contracting party, to procure the approval of the Citizens and to carry the whole into effect, the undersigned affixed their names to the Document which follows.

* "I think that they hinted, that it was possible from the number of the Members of the Common Council that were and would be absent from Bristol, that the Meeting might possibly be delayed as late as September."—*R. H. Davis.*

"*Salopian Coffee-House, May* 14, 1824.

"The Deputation of the Chamber of Commerce, at the suggestion, and through the medium of R. H. Davis, Esq. M. P. submit to the Deputation of the Common Council the following Propositions:—

"1st.—That the amount of Town Dues for the use of the Corporation be limited to the sum of £4000 per Annum.

"2nd.—That for raising that sum a Package Rate shall be levied on Foreign Trade, to be paid equally by Freemen and Non-freemen. The Shipping to be wholly exempted from Mayor's Dues.

"3rd.—That Ireland shall be considered as an integral part of the kingdom, and exempted accordingly from the Rate.

"4th.—That the endeavour shall be so to lay the Rate as to leave a Surplus above the £4000., which Surplus shall form a Sinking Fund for the Redemption of the Rate.

"5th.—But in case of a deficiency in any one year, such deficiency to be made up out of the Sinking Fund.

"6th.—A Schedule to be made by the Common Council to raise not less than £4000. per Annum by a Package Rate on Foreign Trade to and from Bristol, such Schedule to be published not later than two months after the Act receives the Royal Assent.

"7th.—That the Schedule may be altered in whole, or in part, by the Common Council, at any time during the first Seven years after passing the Act.

"8th.—The alteration of the whole Schedule shall be to the effect of keeping the collection effectual to the raising of £5000. viz. £4000. for the Revenue, and £1000. for the Sinking Fund, or for the purpose of diminishing the whole Rate should the collection much exceed the above sum.

"9th.—Partial alterations to be made for the convenience and advantage of the General Trade, and in either case the alteration shall not take place until six months after the publication, in order to give timely notice to Foreign Correspondents trading with the Port.

"10th.—A Bill on this principle to be brought in by the Common Council so soon as they shall be requested by the Chamber of Commerce and a respectable body of their Fellow-citizens to do so. That the Chamber of Commerce will sup-

port the same with its whole influence, and that the Society of Merchants and the Dock Company be invited also to give their sanction and support to the measure.

" The Deputation from the Chamber of Commerce will submit a Copy of this Paper to the Chamber, with their earnest recommendation that the Proposition be acceded to by it.

(Signed)

" Joseph Cookson, V. P.
" James Lean.
" Robert Browne.
" J. L. McAdam.
" J. M. Gutch.
" G. E. Sanders.
" Saml. Harford.
" Thos. Reynolds.

" *To Rich. Hart Davis, Esq. M. P.*
&c. &c. &c."

The following Memorandum, under the signatures of the Members of the Deputation from the Common Council, was attached to a copy of the terms of agreement.

" *Osborne's Hotel, Adelphi,*
" *May 14th,* 1824.

" The Deputation from the Common Council of Bristol have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a Communication from the Chamber of Commerce, through Mr. Davis, of which the annexed is a copy, and they beg to state their intention of laying the same before the Common Council at their earliest meeting, and to recommend its confirmation.

(Signed) " Richard Vaughan.
" John Haythorne.
" Wm. Fripp, Jun.
" John Savage.

" *To R. H. Davis, Esq. M. P.*
&c. &c. &c."

This arrangement received on the suggestion of Mr. Davis, and provisionally concluded under his auspices and recommendation, your Board submitted to your consideration on the 1st

July, the interval of six weeks having been deemed proper for the public opinion to be elicited upon the policy of the measure, and as affording to the Members the opportunity of coming prepared to enter upon the discussion of its merits with the advantage of previous information and leisure for duly calculating the probable results. In the report of this date your Board entered fully into the several views to be taken of the proposed plan, the advantages to be anticipated, the effects likely to be produced, and the benefits that would arise to the Burgesses in exchange for the sacrifice required from them, with the motives on which each Citizen might for the advancement of his personal interests concur in the approval of the proposed measure. To this arrangement your Board had the satisfaction of receiving at your hands an unqualified approval and confirmation, and from the feeling expressed at the Meeting, as well as the unanimity with which the subject was entertained (the slight opposition presented having liberally been withdrawn in deference to the general sentiment) your Board was induced to hope, that it had arrived at a stage in its transactions from which it might look forward with the gratifying prospect of a cordial co-operation with the Municipal and other constituted authorities of the City, in bringing this important subject to a conclusion accordant with the views and interests of all classes of the community. In this object, so truly desirable in all respects, your Board has unhappily been disappointed through the determination of the Common Council to refuse the fulfilment of the agreement, founded on the dissent expressed by a few of our Fellow-Citizens. Your Board although, neither the projectors or the original

proposers of the arrangement, deeply regrets the disappointment which the Chamber and Citizens generally must, as your Board is induced to believe, have felt at the entire abandonment of the agreement entered into and confirmed, and at the necessity of your Board retracing its steps to secure by other means the degree of relief essential to the welfare of the City.

To which party the occasion of the unhappy result may be imputed, your Board will neither seek an opinion nor attempt to lead the judgment of the Chamber; it will content itself with laying before you the whole series of its documents and communications with the Common Council, whereby it hopes to establish a complete justification, and to secure your approval of the policy, tone of sentiment, and line of argument with which the particular subject has been treated.

Resolutions of the Common Council of 2nd Aug. 1824, in reply to the application of the Board through Mr. Davis, requesting to be informed if the Common Council had confirmed the acts of their Deputation, and for a Copy of the Contract.

"At a Meeting of the COMMITTEE appointed by the COMMON COUNCIL, relative to the TOWN and MAYOR'S DUES, held at the Guildhall, on Monday the 2nd day of August 1824,

"*It is Resolved*—

"That this Committee readily assents to the application made to Mr. Davis by the Chamber of Commerce, for a Copy of the Endorsement signed by the Deputation from the Common Council when in London, on the propositions then submitted to them.

"That this Committee feels surprized that any misunderstanding should exist as to the course to be pursued by the Common Council relative to the propositions submitted to the Deputation from the Chamber of Commerce, through the medium of Mr. Davis, to the Deputation from the Common Council, inasmuch as it appears from the representation of the latter Deputation, and from the very words of the proposition, that it was expressly understood the Common Council could not be expected to take any steps in furtherance of the proposed measures, until requested to do so by the Chamber of Commerce and a respectable body of their Fellow-citizens; and until the Society of Merchants and the Bristol Dock Company had been invited to give their sanction thereto.

"*Resolved*—That Mr. Davis be informed that the Committee has laid a Report of the Proceedings which took place in London before the Common Council; and so far from that body having declined to confirm the proceedings of their Committee, it is the opinion of this Meeting that the Common Council are waiting to receive the sentiments of the bodies referred to, and of the Burgesses in general, before they act upon questions which so deeply affect the rights of all parties interested.

"*Resolved*—That Mr. Mayor be requested to transmit a Copy of the foregoing Resolutions to R. H. Davis, Esq.

Resolutions of Committee of Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Aug. 13, 1824.

"The Letters of the Right Worshipful the Mayor, the Resolutions of the Committee of the Common Council of 2nd inst. with a Copy of the Terms of Arrangement of the 14th May, and the Indorsement thereon, under the signature of their Deputation; and the Minutes of Proceedings in London supplied by the Members of the Deputation, on the Requisition of this Committee, being severally laid before this Committee, read and considered,

"*It was Resolved*—

"1st.—That this Committee is convinced that the Common Council, agreeably with the engagement of their Deputation,

are pledged to take into immediate consideration the terms of arrangement entered into provisionally by their Deputation with the Deputation of the Chamber, and to confirm or annul such arrangement, and that until the Common Council shall have so done, and the arrangement shall have become concluded between the two parties, this Committee cannot consider the Chamber bound to adopt any of the further measures for carrying the arrangement into full effect.

"2ndly.—That the Committee considers itself fully justified in adopting the foregoing resolution, by *the facts* as detailed in the Minutes of the Deputation, by the terms of the Document under the signature of the Members of the Common Council Deputation, and by *the fair inference* to be drawn from the articles of arrangement; by the facts and terms of the Document, in as much as the articles of arrangement were discussed by each Deputation; were altered in many respects by the Deputation of the Common Council; were put into the form of propositions as from the Chamber, to suit a particular view of the Common Council (then explained); were agreed to by the Members of the Common Council Deputation, who promised also to use their influence in prevailing upon their body to accede to them; were verified by the signature of each individual member, and which verification comprizes a pledge to submit the arrangement to the Common Council at their earliest Meeting, and to *recommend* its confirmation. By fair inference from the terms themselves, in as much as the arrangement consists of acts to be done by the Common Council, their assent to the performance of which is essential before the subject can properly be proposed to the approval of the Citizens; and in as much also as the terms provide that on a request by the Chamber of Commerce and a respectable body of their Fellow-citizens, and on the Society of Merchants and the Dock Company being invited to give their sanction, the Common Council *will bring in the proposed Bill.*

"3rdly.—That Mr. Davis be requested to apply to the Common Council for an explicit answer to the following question: Have the Deputation from the Common Council, in conformity with their written engagement, recommended to a Meeting of their body a confirmation of the arrangement by them entered into with the Deputation of the Chamber of Commerce; and if

so, have the Common Council adopted or rejected such recommendation and arrangement?

"4thly.—That the foregoing Resolutions, with the recent Proceedings of this Committee, be submitted to the Board of Directors for their confirmation, and that a Meeting for the purpose be convened for Monday next.

(Signed)

"THOS. STOCK, Chairman."

These Resolutions were confirmed by the Board.

Memorial of Dissentient Burgesses.

(Copy) "*Bristol, 24th July*, 1824.

"To the Right Worshipful the MAYOR, the Worshipful the ALDERMEN, the SHERIFFS, and other Members of the COMMON COUNCIL.

"This MEMORIAL is humbly presented and sheweth,—

"That your Memorialists are free Burgesses of the City of Bristol, and by right thereof are seized of certain privileges.

"That among many others, your Memorialists are exempted, under certain circumstances, from the payment of an impost, called 'Town Dues,' chargeable on the importation and exportation of Goods, and which exemption is, and has been from time immemorial, peculiar to the Burgesses.

"That in the same proportion as your Memorialists have increased their Commercial pursuits in the City of Bristol, this privilege of exemption has become the more valuable to them; and they consider and maintain the same to be their undoubted and inalienable right.

"That there has lately been established in the City of Bristol, a Society denominated 'A Chamber of Commerce,' composed of Individuals, a great many of whom are not Burgesses.

"That among other subjects of consideration embraced by this Chamber, very detailed discussions are said to have taken place between the Common Council and the Directors of that Association, on the Local Taxation of the Port, which it is now notorious have led to a preliminary arrangement, by which a general Package Rate is to supersede the Town Dues, and which Package Rate is to be levied on *Freemen* and Non-Freemen indiscriminately.

"That this arrangement has been projected and entered into without the consent of the Burgesses, under a specious and contingent pretext, and against which your Memorialists do hereby most solemnly and firmly protest, as an unjust infraction of their rights.

"That your Memorialists will yield to none in zeal for, and devotion to, the best interests of their Fellow Citizens, or in anxiety to promote an extension of the Commerce and Trade of the Port; to accomplish which, it is not necessary or just that they should be deprived of those rights, which are enjoyed by the Freemen of London, Liverpool, and other Corporate Bodies in a similar manner, and the violation of which in their opinion, will neither relieve the Foreign Trade, nor be conducive to the prosperity of the City.

"That your Memorialists most respectfully, but steadfastly as well as naturally, claim the protection of the Common Council, that they being Burgesses may not be made subject to any Tax, in whatever shape however small, that may be substituted for the Town Dues. And your Memorialists look with confidence to a firm resistance of any such proposal.

"Your Memorialists, therefore, most earnestly request that you will be pleased, as early as may suit your own convenience, to inform them of your determination or otherwise to support the interest of your fellow Burgesses, by the adoption of such steps as may be necessary to secure to them the undisturbed possession of their incontrovertible rights."

(Signed by 52 Burgesses.)

Resolution of the Common Council of 15th Sept. 1824.

"At a Meeting of the Common Council, held at the Guildhall, in the City of Bristol, the 15th of September 1824;

"The House resumed the consideration of the Reports from the Committee of the Common Council, on the subject of the Town and Mayor's Dues, together with a Letter from Richard Hart Davis, Esq. and certain Resolutions of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, bearing date

the 15th day of August last, relative to the provisional arrangement submitted through the medium of Mr. Davis, to the Committee of the Common Council, when in London, and also a Memorial addressed to the Common Council, from a respectable body of the Burgesses of this City, remonstrating against such provisional arrangement as an infraction of their rights, and claiming the protection of this Corporation, and praying 'that the Memorialists may not be made subject to any Tax, in whatever shape, however small, that may be substituted for the Town Dues;' and which documents were severally read at the last Meeting of the House.

"Whereupon it was unanimously resolved, that the Deputation from the Committee of this Corporation have redeemed to the fullest extent the pledge they gave to Mr Davis, on the subject of the provisional arrangement above referred to; and which arrangement this Corporation confirm, and will be ready to carry into effect, with the approbation and sanction of the Burgesses of this City; any sacrifice of whose rights must proceed from their own concession, uninfluenced by any interference on the part of this Corporation. Still this Corporation wish it to be distinctly understood, that however they may regret that their best endeavours to promote the Trade and Prosperity of the Port, by reducing and regulating the Dues, have hitherto been frustated, it is their earnest wish and inclination to afford that relief at the earliest possible period; and which, if this Corporation had not been interfered with, would ere this have been secured by legislative enactment."

Memorial of the Chamber of Commerce, presented 1st November, 1824.

"To the Right Worshipful the Mayor, the Worshipful the Aldermen, and the Common Council of the City of Bristol, in Common Council assembled.

"The Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, Trade, and Manufactures.

"The Chamber, at a Special Meeting held on the First day of July last, having unanimously approved the arrangement

entered into provisionally by the Deputations from your Worshipful Body and this Board, on the subject of the Town and Mayor's Dues, and having directed this Board to adopt all further measures which might be necessary on the part of the Chamber, for carrying the same into effect; your Memorialists, in obedience to such instructions, have proposed the subject to the consideration of the Burgesses and Citizens in the form of Memorials, and have invited the Society of Merchants and the Dock Company to give their sanction and support to the measure.

"In these proceedings your Memorialists have endeavoured, by every reasonable means, to inform their Fellow Burgesses and Citizens of the grounds on which your Corporation and the Chamber have been induced to concur, in recommending the arrangement for approval and adoption; and your Memorialists beg to lay before you a Copy of their Report, in which the measure is faithfully and strongly urged upon the favourable consideration of the Citizens, by arguments shewing the necessity of an effectual alteration in the Imposts, and the manifest advantage of such alteration to all classes.

"The arrangement is approved by a large proportion of the Commercial and Trading Community; and the Memorials * now presented to your Corporation, will be found to contain the names of a body of Citizens highly respectable, both by their number and interests in the City, many of whom are Burgesses in right of purchase, who will contribute largely in the Imposts as proposed to be continued; and who, though now enjoying the full extent of right and privilege under the existing System, consent to relinquish their immediate advantage for promoting the general welfare of the City.

"For the opinion of the Society of Merchants on this important subject, your Memorialsts have the satisfaction of referring you to the able Report of that Society of the 8th day of March last, in which the very tenor and spirit of the proposed arrangement is suggested, in clear terms, as the best calculated for relieving the Commerce and Trade of the Port from the injurious effects acknowledged to resnlt from the Municipal Imposts.

* A Memorial from Burgesses, signed by numerous respectable individuals. A similar Memorial from Citizens not Burgesses.

"Your Memorialists, actuated by the necessity of some efficient measure for reducing these Imposts to an equality with those of more favored Ports, and feeling that the justice of the proposed measure for accomplishing the object cannot be impeached, respectfully solicit your Worshipful Corporation to bring into Parliament, and support by your best exertions and influence, a Bill for carrying into effect the arrangement which has been made and ratified. And your Memorialists confidently trust, that when the whole subject shall be laid before Parliament, where every Interest will be attentively considered, all difficulty will be removed; and that regulations, founded upon the arrangement agreed upon by your Worshipful Body and the Chamber of Commerce, sanctioned by the opinion of the Society of Merchants, as expressed in their Report of the 8th March last, and solicited by Petitions from the great body of Freemen and other Inhabitants, cannot fail of being established to the satisfaction and ultimate advantage of all parties, in the restoration of the Trade and Commerce of the Port.

"By the Board of Directors,

(Signed) "THOMAS STOCK,

"*Bristol, 1st Nov.* 1824." "Chairman.

Resolution of the Common Council of 6th Nov.

"At a Meeting of the COMMON COUNCIL of the City of Bristol, held at the Guildhall, in the said city, on Saturday, the 6th day of November 1824,

"Mr. MAYOR laid before the Common Council a Memorial addressed to the Corporation from the Chamber of Commerce, and also a Memorial signed by a body of Freemen, and another Memorial signed by a body of Non-freemen of this City, on the subject of the Town and Mayor's Dues, requesting that this Corporation will solicit an Act of Parliament in the ensuing Session for carrying the arrangement referred to in such Memorials, into effect, and the same having been severally read and taken into consideration,

"*Resolved unanimously*—That the principle upon which the Deputation in London consented to recommend to the Com-

mon Council the proposition made through the medium of Mr. Davis, and upon which this Corporation afterwards adopted it, was that the Common Council would not oppose the general wish of the Burgesses and others interested in the question of the Dues, to make the arrangement and modification suggested; but that if any serious opposition should occur, it was expressly stated and understood, that the measure should not be proceeded in. The Comman Council, therefore, in the face of a Memorial presented by a considerable number of Burgesses dissenting from, and remonstrating against the arrangement, does not consider that it is expedient or proper to take any steps in the proposed Parliamentary proceedings. The Common Council, however, are still anxious to be enabled, under the authority of Parliament, to afford such relief to the Trade and Commerce of the Port, by a reduction and modification of the Dues, as may from time to time be expedient, which relief it must be again stated would before this time have been voluntarily conceded to the Port, if the interference of the Chamber of Commerce had not prevented it."

Resolution of the Chamber of Commerce in reply:—

"At a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held the 6th day of December, 1824,

"A Resolution of the Common Council dated the 6th November last having been read, and the Document being fully considered, the following Reply was agreed to:—

"The Board having reviewed attentively the Minutes of the Proceedings which led to the arrangement provisionally made through the medium of Mr. Davis, by the Deputation from the Common Council with the Deputation from the Chamber, and having referred to the terms themselves, and the several resolutions of the Committee of the Common Council, on the requisitions of the Board for a confirmation of the acts of their Deputation, is unable to reconcile the resolution of the Common Council of the 6th November last, and their other pro-

ceedings arising out of the arrangement, with those acknowledged principles by which public Bodies as well as private Individuals ought to be governed. In this conclusion, the Board has no desire of imputing to the Common Council intentional wrong; the difference of opinion may arise from a variance or misconstruction upon the facts; and as the Board is anxious it's claims should rest on a sure basis, it will submit to the Common Council some of the material facts for their consideration. It appears from the minutes of the Deputation of this Board, that several verbal communications passed between the two Deputations, through the medium of Mr. Davis and Mr. Dundas; none of which were productive of any favorable result. On the 13th May, a distinct proposal of terms was made by Mr. Davis, on his own suggestion, to the two Deputations, the concluding clause of which provided, that the Common Council should bring into Parliament a Bill containing particular provisions which the Chamber of Commerce was to support, and to which the Society of Merchant Venturers and Dock Company were to be invited to give their support. To this point of bringing in a Bill of their own accord, the Deputation from the Common Council demurred; proposing to introduce an article 'for a requisition to them from the Chamber of Commerce and the Burgesses, and to alter the form of the document into a proposition from the Chamber; stating as a reason, that having received Premiums for granting the privileges of exemption from the Town Dues, which privileges would cease by the intended Bill, it would not be decorous for the measure to originate with them.' The word 'Burgesses' being altered to 'a respectable body of their Fellow Citizens,' the terms so settled were by both parties finally agreed upon; Mr. Davis assuring the Deputation of this Board, that the Common Council Deputation not only approved the terms so agreed to, but had promised him to use their influence to prevail upon their Body to consent to the measure; adding also, that it was his firm belief the Common Council were sincere in their wish that the arrangement might be carried into effect. Mr. Davis, on requiring of the Deputation of the Chamber their written acknowledment of approval, expressed his intention of procuring such a guaranty from the other party as should bind them to a fulfilment of the engagement. This guaranty the

Members of the Common Council Deputation gave, by subscribing their names individually to a memorandum authenticating the arrangement, pledging themselves 'to lay the same before their Body at the earliest meeting, and to recommend it's confirmation.' Upon these facts this Board has ever considered the arrangement so concluded, as being in effect and as having the force of an agreement, involving, as respects the two contracting parties, mutual obligations and reciprocal duties; from the due fulfilment of which, neither party can claim to be discharged upon any principle resting on an understanding uncommunicated to the other party, incompatible with the spirit and tenor of the agreement, and in contravention to its express terms. In addition to the view which the Board takes of the principle on which the Common Council rest their resolution of the 6th Nov. last, there are other points in that resolution to which this Board is equally unable to subscribe its assent. The Board has yet to learn that the general wish of the Burgesses and others interested in the question of the Dues is adverse to the proposed arrangement; it cannot admit the assumption, that from a Memorial signed by 52 dissentient Burgesses, the sentiments of the whole body are to be determined; on the contrary, the unanimous approval of the arrangement by the Common Council themselves; the unqualified assent to it's principles by the Society of Merchant Venturers, as expressed in their Report of the 8th of March last; the approving Memorials presented to the Corporation, containing the names of threefold the number of respectable Burgesses as compared with the counter Memorial, and a second approving Memorial from Non-Freemen, equally respectably signed; these, together with the unanimous vote of the Chamber, might, the Board conceives, have been considered as testifying the sentiments of 'a respectable body of Citizens,' and might have protected the arrangement from the unqualified abandonment upon which the Common Council in their discretion have resolved. Independently of these grounds of objection, the abandonment appears to be inconsistent with the antecedent proceedings of the Common Council. The Memorial of the dissentient Burgesses was before the Common Council at the period of their discussing the terms and confirming the arrangement; no new circumstances have arisen, and the same motives which induced

the Common Council, 'in the face of this opposition,' to confirm the engagement, should, it is submitted, now carry them on to the fulfilment of it. That the opposition was excited, and that the measure has not been readily adopted by a comparatively greater number of the Burgesses, is not to be attributed to the acts of this Board; although not a measure of its suggestion, this Board has, nevertheless, urged the approval with fidelity; and if the Common Council had given their confirmation immediately on the return of their Deputation, and had afforded any degree of that encouragement which was relied upon from the assurances of Mr. Davis, and the respectable character of the Deputation, and which support this Board feels to have been due from the Common Council, as a contracting party, the result would, without doubt, have been more satisfactory.

"The Board considered it unnecessary to allude in its last Memorial to the imputation cast upon the Chamber, of its interference having precluded the Common Council from acquiring, under the authority of Parliament, the power of reducing and modifying the Dues to such extent as might from time to time in their judgment be expedient, and which relief they were anxious to afford; the reproach was uncalled for and undeserved, and since it is repeated the Board must, in vindication of its measures, advert to the correspondence and proceedings of the Common Conncil.

"The Memorial of this Board of the 7th August, 1823, 'respectfully intreated the earliest attention of the Common Council to the subject of the depression and injury which the Commerce and Trade of the City and Port of Bristol were then suffering through the weight and partiality of the Town Dues, the Mayor's Dues, and other Municipal Imposts and Regulations, with a view to relief by their remission or material diminution;' in reply to which on the 22nd Sept. 1823, the Mayor, in a letter to Mr. V. P. Cookson, stated 'that the Corporation could not interfere as proposed by the Memorial,' and on the 3rd of November following the Common Council unanimously determined, that 'they were not convinced of the Trade and Commerce of the City being in a depressed state and still decreasing from Local Taxation.'

"To this period, therefore, it may be fairly inferred, that there

was no intention of reducing the charges, and it was not until a Deputation from the Chamber had procured an interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Common Council would admit the necessity of relief, or consent to enter upon the consideration of affording it. A Bill was then brought by the Common Council into Parliament, the object of which was to empower them to vary and reduce the charges, but which did not alter the present objectionable mode of assessment, nor define the extent of reduction, its commencement or duration, which left the subject entirely at the will of the Common Council, with power again from time to time to raise and increase the charges at their pleasure: wanting therefore, all the essentials of an efficient measure of relief to the Trade of the Port, and being in no degree calculated to give confidence and encouragement to foreign connexions, in fixing permanently the scale of Dues, the Bill was necessarily objected to. Distinct proposals of amendment were made, to which the Common Council refused their assent, when finally, by the mediation and under the recommendation of Mr. Davis, particular terms of arrangement were concluded between the Common Council and the Chamber, which though subsequently confirmed by the Common Council, they now, as before stated, refuse to fulfil. Under these circumstances the Board considers its interference in respectfully soliciting, in the first instance, the attention of the Common Council to the necessity of reduction in their charges, and in subsequently requiring that a scale of the continned charges should be defined by the Bill, was no other than its duty; and it is surprised that the Common Council should think of alleging this interference as the cause of their own delay in complying with the reasonable requisitions of their Fellow-citizens for promoting the welfare of the Commercial and Trading Interests of the Port.

" This Board, representing an association of nearly 300 respectable firms and individuals, cannot be justified in reposing, and the Common Council ought not to require an unqualified confidence in their affording of their own inclination, and to the reduction of their Corporate Funds, the degree of relief which is now necessary, and the means of which are capable of being now defined. The proposed arrangement has defined such means, and if any point is capable of improvement, such

improvement might have been made without annulling the other articles of the agreement.

"The Chamber, embodied for the sole purpose of promoting the public good, has considered itself entitled to claim from the Common Council and other Local Bodies, the attention and degree of consideration due to the objects and character of the Institution: by a calm investigation into the causes of evils, and by respectful Memorials to the Authorities competent to remedy them, this Board, as the Executive of the Chamber, has endeavoured to discharge faithfully its legitimate duties; it has carefully abstained, both directly and indirectly, from all expressions which should interrupt an amicable adjustment of existing differences, and it proposes, under a continuance of that support it has hitherto experienced, to pursue its object with independence, firmness, and perseverance.

"*It was Resolved unanimously*—That a copy of the foregoing Document be transmitted to the Mayor, with a Letter signed by the Chairman, requesting him to lay the same before the Common Council, and that copies be also sent to Mr. Davis, Mr. Bright, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Dock Company, and that the Secretary be permitted to allow copies to be taken by the Gentlemen of the Press.

(Signed) "THOMAS STOCK, Chairman."

[Since the transmission of this Document, the Chamber has not been favored by a Communication from the Common Council.]

By this narrative and series of Documents, the proceedings of your Board may be traced through the progressive stages, and from the same source may be drawn some estimate of the difficulties that have been experienced, and of the exertions and attention which have been applied. Throughout the voluminous communications with the Common Council, no difference of opinion or feeling of disappointment at their refusal of conference and general line of

conduct have betrayed your Board into a tone of sentiment, or style of expression which bears the feature of imputation upon the character of, or disrespect to the Members of the Common Council, either collectively or individually; the Board has confined itself strictly to the question of the degree of reduction in the Municipal Imposts necessary for placing the Trade of the Port on a footing of equality in the scale of charges and facilities with other places of Commercial resort, treating the subject as purely a matter of business, without allowing personal feeling, however excited, to influence its proceedings.

In drawing the comparison between the present prospects of the Chamber and those of the corresponding period of last year, it will be observed that a considerable advance has been made towards the attainment of the object in view; the discussion and additional consideration of the subject have inclined the Common Council to a closer approximation with the precise claims of the Chamber, and it may be hoped that they will no longer refuse to admit the justice of such claims, nor decline to make those concessions and reductions which your Board has sedulously urged to be essential to the revival of Trade and Commerce. The attainment of this object without additional delay becomes the more important, on account of the extensive Schemes which are daily introduced to the notice of the public, in which the improvement of particular districts is in each case contemplated, and by which the interests of this city must necessarily be more or less affected. The Commercial Bodies of Liverpool, low as their charges comparatively are, and likewise of London, Dublin, Greenock and other places

are closely following the example which the Government of the country has, to its infinite credit, shewn in the reduction of all charges within the scope of its authority, and in the adoption of an enlightened policy in giving to Foreigners encouragement by the removal of restrictions and invidious distinctions; all are making strenuous efforts to share the advantages of this policy, by reducing to the lowest limit the charges to which ships and merchandize are subject in their respective ports; well knowing that the degree of encouragement thus given, whilst it seconds the views of Government, tends also to their own prosperity in the increase and advancement of their particular mercantile connexions. These considerations, coupled with the circumstance of the extensive and almost universal inland communications proposed to be effected with each part of the kingdom by means of Rail-Roads, apply with additional force to the expediency of a permanent, immediate, and efficient reduction in all the Local Imposts affecting the Commerce of this Port; and of such paramount importance are they to the welfare of the city, that waiving personal feelings, all Public Bodies and each private individual will, the Board hopes, unite in active exertions to seize the opportunity, and to secure to this opulent city the full share of benefits it may be capable of receiving in this time of rapid advancement in national prosperity.

In the transactions thus reported, your Board has endeavoured to discharge faithfully the the duties undertaken, and to promote to the utmost of its ability the legitimate purposes for which the Institution has been formed. In the estimate of these proceedings the judg-

ment must not be altogether governed by positive results; few could have been so sanguine as to have imagined that the Institution could have accomplished a complete reform of abuses, an extensive reduction in charges, or a removal of all the impediments and disadvantages with which the Commercial Interests of this Port have peculiarly to contend; in addition to long-established usage, and the natural prejudice against innovation, your Board has been obliged to sustain a direct collision with the Common Council, a Body powerful in resources, in the weight and character of its authority, and in the individual influence and number of its several Members; the difficulties experienced have been of no ordinary kind; nevertheless, relying on the justice of its cause, and the continuance of your support, your Board has firmly and steadily pursued its measures in an even course, uninfluenced by any considerations of a peronal tendency; seeking by perseverance and the force of conviction, rather than by hostility, to accomplish the legitimate purposes of the Institution, and in particular the amelioration of the Local Taxation of the Port, in which all our Fellow Citizens have one common interest, and by which alone can the City be restored to its proper rank in national value and estimation.

The recent visit to this City of the Earl of Liverpool and Mr. Canning having presented an opportunity of conveying to those distinguished individuals an acknowledgment of the benefits the country has derived under their Administration of public affairs, your Board, considering it within the scope of its delegated authority, presented to them a complimentary Address; in the sentiments of which the Chamber at large will, it is hoped, fully concur. A copy of the

Address, with the particulars of the polite attention and encouraging reply which your Deputation received having been lately published, your Board will not extend its Report by introducing them.

In furtherance of the objects and purposes of your Chamber, the Board appeals to the several Commercial and Trading Interests of the City for co-operation and support. By its constitution your Body is open to the admission of all respectable individuals, and the accession of additional numbers, whilst it would advance by increased information and resources the design of your Institution, would also extend the sphere of its utility.

The Accounts subjoined contain the particulars of expenditure for the past year. Of the Fund raised specifically for the amelioration of the Local Taxation of the Port, a balance of £1069. 18s. 5d. remains unapplied, which your Board proposes to retain for the carrying into full effect the original purposes of the subscription.

The business of several Committees being incomplete, your Board suggests the expediency of continuing on such Committees the Members belonging to them who will retire from the direction for the present year Your Board would also acknowledge the prompt attention which its several communications have received from the Members of Parliament for the City.

ADDENDA to Annual Report.

Since the foregoing Report was passed, your Board has received from the Common Council the following communication :

" At a Meeting of the COMMON COUNCIL, held at the Guildhall, the 22nd day of January 1825 ;

" *It was unanimously Resolved*—

" That the Common Council, with a full determination to afford every assistance and relief to the Trade and Commerce of this City, as far as relates to the Dues payable to them, would have carried into effect the provisional arrangement entered into by the Deputation of the Common Council and the Chamber of Commerce, provided there had been no opposition to the measure by the Burgesses of this City ; but the Common Council, as the acknowledged guardians of the rights of the Freemen, cannot consent to interfere with, or to use any influence to deprive them of their privileges. As that arrangement however, upon mature reflection, has been found impracticable, the Common Council are willing to bring a Bill into Parliament in the ensuing Sessions, provided they can do so without opposition, to relinquish the Town Dues hitherto collected on the Irish and Coasting Trades ; and also to reduce and modify the remaining Rate of Dues, for which latter purpose they have prepared graduated scales of Town and Mayor's Dues, abolishing the *ad valorem* Rate on Town Dues, and substituting a Package or Weight and Measure Rate, as the case may require.

" *Resolved*—That a Copy of this Resolution with the Schedule therein referred to, be transmitted to the Society of Merchants, the Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, and the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, for their consideration."

The foregoing Document was accompanied by a Letter from Messrs. BRICE and BURGES, dated the 26th inst. stating that the Schedules referred to in the Resolutions were not quite ready, but should be sent in a few days.

In the absence of these Documents your Board is unable to enter upon the consideration of the subject.

Dr. *BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE in respect of the GENERAL FUND in Account Current.* *Cr.*

RECEIPTS.	£.	s.	d.
To Arrears of last Year's Annual Subscriptions received	3	3	0
To amount of Annual Subscriptions from 230 Members for the current Year, at £1. 1s. each	241	10	0
Subscriptions in Arrear	13	13	0
	227	17	0
To Entrance Money of 26 Members	54	12	0
To Arrears	6	6	0
	48	6	0
To one Life Subscription	21	0	0
To Interest on Exchequer Bills, to 24th Sept. last	12	0	0
To Balance due to the Treasurers	8	2	3
	£320	8	3
January 20.—To Exchequer Bills purchased	£419	4	8

Audited and Examined,
Bristol, 20th January 1825.

JOHN HOWELL.
EDW: SLADE.

PAYMENTS.	£.	s.	d.
By Balance due to Treasurers as per last Account	86	19	4
Payments as under viz.			
John Willis, for Office Furniture	17	9	6
R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes & Proceedings	17	15	10
Petty Disbursements for the Year, as per Secretary's Account of Particulars exhibited.—Mr. Hellicar's 22 14 3			
Mr. Bigg's 8 10 7			
31 4 10			
Less amount voted from the Fund for Ameliorating the Local Taxation of the Port 15 0 0			
16	4	10	
Rent of Committee Rooms to 24th June 10 10 0			
21st Dec. 13 2 6			
23	12	6	
Fire and Laundress, 1st half year 3 3 0			
2nd ditto ditto 2 12 6			
5	15	6	
First Half Year's Salary to late Secretary 52 10 0			
Second ditto to present ditto, to 31st Dec. 52 10 0			
105	0	0	
Printer's and Advertising	37	0	9
Collecting Subscriptions	10	10	0
	£320	8	3
Jan 20, 1825.—By Balance due the Treasurers	£8	2	3

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE in respect of the FUND for AMELIORATING the LOCAL TAXATION, in Account Current.

Dr. *Cr.*

1825.	RECEIPTS.	£.	s.	d.
Jan. 1.	To amount of Subscriptions received to this day	1644	15	6
		£1644	15	6
1825.				
Jan. 20.	To Balance brought down	69	18	5
	To amount Treasurers' Deposit Note ..	1000	0	0
		£1069	18	5

Audited and Examined,
Bristol, 20th January, 1825.

JOHN HOWELL.
EDWARD SLADE.

	PAYMENTS.	£.	s.	d.
By	Expences incurred in three Deputations to London, during the months of January, February, April, and May, ...	325	17	2
	T. Allan, Esq. Law Expenses	63	10	2
	The representatives of the late Mr. G. Hellicar, for his Professional remuneration 52 10 0			
	Two Payments by him 21 0 0			
		73	10	0
	Anderson, Law Stationer, his Account ..	7	11	6
	Davenhill, for collecting Subscriptions and Services as a Clerk	21	5	0
	Vote to General Fund, for Drib Expenses, peculiarly belonging to this branch of the Chamber's proceedings	15	0	0
	Paid Printers' Accounts	68	3	3
	Deposit Note of Bankers' carrying interest	1,000	0	0
	Balance in the hands of the Treasurers ...	69	18	5
		£1644	15	6

146-11-6

Commercial Room, Monday Jan. 31, 1825.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Chamber, held this day, at the Commercial Room,

Mr. THOS. STOCK, V.P. in the Chair,

The REPORT from the Board of Directors having been read, it was moved by JOHN SCANDRETT HARFORD, Esq. seconded by J. S. FRY, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously*,—That the Report now read be approved, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Board.

It was moved by GEO. FISHER, Esq. seconded by CHRISTOPHER GEORGE, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously*,—That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the President, Vice-Presidents, and other Members of the Board of Directors, for the zeal and ability with which their several duties have been discharged; and that the Gentlemen retiring from the Board, who may be Members of existing Committees, be requested to continue during the current year their services in such Committees, until the particular subjects referred to them be disposed of.

It was moved J. L. MCADAM, Esq. seconded by SAMUEL HARFORD, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously*,—That this Meeting, deeming it essential to the prosperity of the City, that the Local Taxation should be reduced to the lowest posssible standard, and that the Mercantile and Trading Interests should have afforded to them the means of competition with those of other Ports, requests the Board will continue to direct its attention to the attainment of these primary objects.

It was moved by JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq. V.P. seconded by JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Esq. and carried *unanimously*,—That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Members in Parliament of the City, for their prompt attention to the several Communications from the Board.

It was moved by JOHN MANNINGFORD, Esq. seconded by FREDERICK RICKETTS, Esq. and *Resolved unanimously*,—That the Audited Accounts, with the Resolutions of this Meeting, signed by the Chairman, be published once in each of the Bristol Papers.

The Ballot being taken for Directors to supply the vacancies occasioned by resignation, and Members retiring from the Board according to the Rules of the Institution, E. B. FRIPP Esq. and F. RICKETTS, Esq. were appointed Scrutineers.

On the motion of THOMAS REYNOLDS, Esq. seconded by JAMES LEAN, Esq.,—*it was Resolved*, that this Meeting do adjourn to Monday next, the 7th of Feb. at the Commercial Rooms, at Twelve o'clock, to receive the Report upon the Ballot, and elect a President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, and Auditors for the current year.

THOS. STOCK, CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct and attention.

LIONEL BIGG, SECRETARY.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT

OF

The Board of Directors

MADE TO THE CHAMBER

AT A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING,

Held the 30th of March, 1825,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOM, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL-STREET.

1825.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT, &c.

Your Board has deemed it expedient to submit to your consideration the Bill of the Common Council, for enabling them to reduce, alter, modify, and regulate the Town and Mayor's Dues; to present to you a Report upon the proceedings since the last meeting; and to take your directions upon the measures it may be expedient to adopt under the existing circumstances.

The Annual Report made on the 31st January last, contained the resolution of the Common Council of the 22d then instant, by which they determined on bringing a Bill into Parliament (provided they could do so without opposition), for relinquishing the Town Dues on the Irish and Coasting trade, and for reducing and modifying the remaining rate of Dues; for which latter purpose they had prepared graduated scales of Town and Mayor's Dues, abolishing the *ad valorem* Rate on Town Dues, and substituting a Package or weight and measure Rate, as the case might require; and that a Copy of the Schedule referred to should be

transmitted to the Board for its consideration. On the 8th February, by a communication from the Solicitors of the Common Council, which accompanied a Schedule, the Board was informed, that the Common Council would be ready to receive any suggestion in regard to any particular charge in the proposed Schedule of Town Dues.

A minute examination of the Schedule was immediately entered upon, and a comparison made with similar rates payable at other Ports, and finally your Board came to the following Resolutions, which were transmitted to the Common Council.

" March 1st, 1825.

" The Board in taking into its consideration the Papers transmitted by the Common Council, has been guided in its proceedings by the resolution of the Common Council of the 22nd ult. which directed a Copy of the Schedules to be sent to the Chamber, and by the Letter of Messrs. Brice and Burges of 8th inst. written by order of the Common Council, by which the President is informed, ' that the Common Council will be ready to receive any suggestion from the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, in regard to any particular charge contained in the proposed Schedule of Town Dues.' In considering this Schedule, therefore, the Board has confined itself to the effect of the Dues on the trade and commerce of the Port, without reference to the ulterior proceedings, which it is happy to learn the Common Council intend to bring forward in Parliament ' with a full determination to afford every assistance to the trade and commerce of the City.' In proceeding with the examination of the Schedules, the Board has experienced considerable difficulty, arising from the extended enumeration of articles, and has bestowed great labour in forming an accurate comparison with the Rates of other Ports, in judging the requisite extent of reduction, and in the

calculations shewing the effect of such reduction upon the produce of the proposed and reduced Schedules as compared with each other.

IMPORTS.

"The Board has felt it necessary to suggest the reduction of the Rate on 54 articles which formed subjects of Import in the year 1822, and on 36 articles in which there does not appear to have been any Foreign trade in that year. These Schedules are marked A and B. On this head the Board would observe, that Foreign Goods imported for exportation, and all Goods admitted to Bond and not used for home consumption but afterwards exported, should be exempted.

EXPORTS.

"Under this head an extensive reduction is suggested as essentially necessary; it being highly important to give return Cargoes, and to encourage the Port as a place of Export for the produce of the Manufacturing districts. The articles reduced are in number 128, including eleven which did not form subjects of Export in 1822. This Schedule is marked C. It would also be expedient to consolidate the numerous articles in the Linen-drapery, Woollen, Haberdashery, and also in the Ironmongery and general trades, which as enumerated in the Schedule would pay distinctly, though contained in one package, and to charge the whole as dry goods at a Package Rate; and it would also be desirable to have the Schedule of Exports separated from that of the Imports.

MAYOR's DUES.

"These Dues have not been considered, the Common Council having confined their request of suggestions to the Town Dues.

"In order to shew the effect of the suggested reductions upon the amount proposed to be raised, the Board has formed calculations on the Imports and Exports of the year 1822, taken from the official returns, such being the latest authentic document, and of which calculations the results are shewn in the following abstract:—

IMPORTS.

Calculated from the Official Returns of 1822.

				£.	s.	d.
Gross Produce of *Proposed Rate* on Sugar	575	3	0			
Deduct 10 ℔ Cent. for Claims of Exemption	57	10	0			
				517	13	0
Ditto on Wool, without deduction, the whole Import generally paying				745	13	0
Ditto on General Imports . .	1630	10	9			
Deduct 50 ℔ Cent for Claims of Exemption	815	5	4			
				815	5	4
				£2078	11	4

				£.	s.	d.
Gross Produce of suggested *Reduced Rate* on Sugars...	575	3	0			
Deduct 10 ℔ Cent for Claims of Exemption	57	10	0			
				517	13	0
Ditto on Wools, without deduction, the whole Import generally paying				745	13	0
Ditto on Moiety of General Imports, the other Moiety being considered as entitled to Claims for Exemption . .				555	11	4
				£1818	17	4

EXPORTS.* *Calculated in like manner.*

				£.	s.	d.
Gross Produce of Proposed Rate on General Exports, one Moiety being deducted as exempt				£1229	1	0

				£.	s.	d.
Gross Produce of suggested Reduced Rates on Exports with the like deduction				£504	16	8

* In the Account of Exports the Irish trade is unavoidably included. The proportion of Irish Exports may be fairly estimated at one Quarter.

" To these calculations of the produce as taken on the trade of 1822, the Board has not made any addition for an increase of particular articles already acquired, or such as may be contemplated to result from the benefit of the reductions in the Rate. In Sugar, the receipts if taken on the Imports of the last year, would bear an increase of £100. and upwards. In the allowance for the *bonâ fide* claims of exemption, the Board feels that in estimating them at one moiety on all Imports and Exports, excepting Sugar and Wool, the advantage is decidedly in favour of the receipts; it being a question whether even at present, but certainly prospectively, an allowance of one third for such claims *bonâ fide* by Freemen, would not be sufficient."

(Signed)

" JOS. COOKSON, V.P. Chairman."

In reply your Board received from the Common Council another copy of the Schedule, amended in some respects. It was accompanied by the following Resolution:—

" At a Meeting of the Committee of the Common Council, on Wednesday the 9th day of March 1825.

" The Committee having taken into consideration the suggestions made to them on the subject of the proposed Schedule of the Town Dues, have come to the determination to adopt certain alterations, particularly as to the Rate upon Woollens, Linens, Silks, and other articles of British Manufacture, composed wholly or partly of Flax, Wool, Cotton or Silk; and to substitute a Package Rate of 2s. 6s. for the charges made upon such articles, except Pennistones and Blankets, which will be charged at 1s. 6d. per Bale, &c.

" The Committee trusts that the proposed alteration will be satisfactory, and entitle the Corporation to the fullest support in obtaining an Act for carrying the measure into effect. It is the intention of the Corporation in furtherance of this object, forthwith to bring a Bill into Parliament, but not to proceed to the second reading until after Easter.

" *Resolved*—That Copies of this Resolution and of the amended Schedule, be transmitted to the Society of Merchants, and the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce."

In reply, your Board transmitted the following document.

"At a Special Meeting of the BOARD of DIRECTORS of the CHAMBER of COMMERCE, held on the 15th March, 1825,—

"JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq. V.P. in the Chair;

"The Resolutions of the Common Council of the 9th inst. with the amended Schedule having been read;—

"*It was Resolved*—That this Board in compliance with the request of the Common Council to be supplied with suggestions upon their proposed Schedule of Town Dues, compared the Rates with those of other Ports, and with considerable labour formed calculations of the probable receipts therefrom, and after mature consideration suggested particular reductions, under a conviction that any measure short of placing the Commercial Interests of the Port on an equality with other places, would fail of producing the effectual benefit which the Chamber and Citizens generally have anxiously sought to attain.

"*It was Resolved*—That the Board retains the same opinion by which it was governed in framing its suggestions upon the proposed Rate of Town Dues, for which reason and under the circumstances of the Mayor's Dues not having been yet submitted for consideration, as also in the absence of any information upon the provisions of the intended Bill, this Board does not deem it adviseable to recommend the Chamber to support the proposed measures of the Common Council.

"*Resolved*—That a Copy of these Resolutions, signed by the Chairman, be forthwith transmitted to the Common Council."

"JOS. COOKSON, V.P. Chairman."

The proposed Bill and Schedules, the latter being in blank as respects the sums, was read a first time in the House of Commons on the 17th inst. and a Copy was, on the 19th, received from Mr. Bright. [*Vide Copy of the Bill in Appendix.*] Your Board lost no time in proceeding to the consideration of the different provisions of this

Bill, and the following observations are presented for your approval as the opinion of your Board upon the probable effect of the proposed measures of the Common Council, and the extent to which they are likely to accomplish the purposes intended.

1*st*. Your Board objects to the Preamble of the Bill, as also to the Clause, absolutely providing for the payment of the Rates, inasmuch as they go to a recognition, by legislative enactment, of a right on the part of the Common Council to the Town Dues and Mayor's Dues, your Board conceiving that such right should be left by the proposed Bill as it now stands, without any confirmation.

2*nd*. Your Board considers it expedient, that the sum to be applied to the purposes of the Common Council should be fixed; that any surplus produce, including all receipts from the sales of Freedom should be carried to a Sinking Fund for the redemption of the Rates; that the account of annual produce should be published, and that some provisions should be introduced for more effectually ascertaining the proprietorship *bonâ fide* of the party claiming to have his goods exempted.

3*rd*. The Blanks in Schedule A. should be supplied with the sums and in manner suggested to the Common Council in the document transmitted on the 3rd instant.

4*th*. Your Board cannot recommend an approval of Schedule B, as appearing in the amended Schedule of the Common Council; and this observation applies also to the Clause in the Bill for enabling Shipowners to compound, in respect of these Dues, for a limitted period.

In these points your Board has pursued the view taken from the earliest agitation of the subject. The confirmation of title was objected to in the Bill of last year, and to which the Common Council replied in the following terms on the 15th March 1824, and the tenor of which reply was afterwards confirmed by their further resolution of the 24th of the same month.

Extract from Resolutions of the COMMON COUNCIL, dated 15th March 1824:—

"*Resolved*—That the Corporation in framing the Bill, had no view to obtain a recognition by legislative enactment of any right to the Town Dues and Mayor's Dues, which they do not at present possess; on the contrary, they are fully satisfied of the validity of their title thereto. If they were not so, it would be unworthy the character and respectability of a Public Body, to attempt by indirect means to acquire a right not appearing upon the face of the Bill to be its real object.

"The Corporation therefore will not hesitate, provided the other objections stated in the Resolutions of the Chamber of Commerce can be reconciled, to consent to the introduction of a Clause in the proposed Bill, which shall restrict them from demanding or receiving any Dues, which they were not legally entitled to at the time of passing the act."

The establishment of a Sinking Fund for redemption of the Rates is so reasonable a proposition, that the Board will not anticipate an objection on the part of the Common Council. The required reduction of the Rates as suggested by your Board is felt to be of the last importance,—the continuing the rate of charges upon a scale so far exceeding that of Liverpool, as the proposed amended Schedule fixes, especially on the Exports, is depriving the measure of its efficiency. The quantum of payment is

not of greater injury than the effect of the disproportion in the charges as compared with other ports, and equality at least is essentially necessary; and when the calculations are examined and the amount of sacrifice to bring the Rates to the degree of desired equality is weighed with the positive advantage of the object, your Board hopes that the Common Council will be induced to concur in the proposed alterations.

The difference in receipt taken upon the trade of 1822, between the Schedule of the Common Council as amended, and suggested by the Board to be further amended, is

On Imports	£220	2	5
On Exports	394	3	5
	£614	5	10

which is shewn by the following calculations:

IMPORTS. *Calculated from the Official Returns of* 1822.

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Gross Produce of *Proposed Rate* on Sugars ... £575 3 0		
Deduct 10 ℔ Cent. for Claims of Exemption... 57 10 0		
	517 13 0	
Ditto on Wool, without deduction, the whole Import generally paying	745 13 0	
Ditto on General Imports 1551 7 6		
Deduct 50 ℔ Cent. for Claims of Exemption... 775 13 9½		
	775 13 9½	
	£2038 19 9½	

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Gross Produce of *Reduced Rate* on Sugars ... £575 3 0		
Deduct 10 ℔ Cent. for Claims of Exemption... 57 10 0		
	517 13 0	
Ditto on Wool, without deduction, the whole Import generally paying	745 13 0	
Ditto on Moiety of General Imports, the other Moiety being considered as entitled to Claims of Exemption	555 11 4	
		£1818 17 4

Estimated Produce of Common Council's amended Schedule	£2038 19 9½
Ditto of Schedule with alterations suggested	1818 17 4
Difference	£220 2 5½

EXPORTS. *Calculated in like mannner.*

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Gross Produce of *Proposed Rate* on General Exports, one Moiety being deducted as exempt £1030 7 10½		
Deduct 25 ℔ Cent. for the Irish Trade, unavoidably included 257 11 11½		
	772 15 11	
	£772 15 11	

	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Gross Produce on *Reduced Rate* on Exports, one Moiety being deducted as exempt ... £504 16 8		
Deduct 25 ℔ Cent. for the Irish Trade ... 126 4 2		
	378 12 6	
		£378 12 6

Estimated Produce of Common Council's amended Schedule	£772 15 11
Ditto of Schedule with alterations suggested	378 12 6
Difference	£394 3 5

Your Board is not aware of having in any instance suggested a reduction below the Liverpool Rates, unless where such Rates may have exceeded the Ad valorem assessment.

The Mayor's Dues at the Rates of Schedule B. would produce on the trade of the past year £980. 10*s*.—viz.

Estimated produce of proposed Rates on Vessels arriving from Foreign Parts	£497	5	0
Ditto from Ireland	271	0	0
Ditto Coasters	212	5	0
	£980	10	0

The produce of the Town Dues at Liverpool of the year ending Oct. 1824, was £43,889. and upwards.

If any argument were wanting to establish the necessity of an efficient measure of relief to the trade, it might be founded on the comparison between the produce of the rates on the commerce of the two places. Your Board does not mean to assume, that the cause of the serious difference appearing upon this comparison is wholly attributable to the Town Dues, but it cannot be denied, that the amount and mode of assessment of the Bristol Town Dues, have had a powerful influence in depressing the Trade of this Port, whilst that of Liverpool, unaffected by such disadvantage, has advanced in so rapid a degree.

Your Board is far from desirous of presenting an opposition to the measures of the Common Council; but to the foregoing requisitions, some of which having been previously assented to, should, it is conceived, have been embodied in the Bill, your Board feels itself called upon to recommend a steady and firm adherence; and if the Common Council should withhold their sanction to the modifications suggested, your Board relies on the Chamber affording its support for procuring such amendments and improvements as shall secure to the City the necessary relief.

At a Meeting of the Chamber, held this 30th day of March 1825, specially convened to consider the provisions and proposed Schedules of the Bill now before Parliament, for "enabling the Common Council to reduce, alter, modify and regulate the Town and Mayor's Dues," and to determine on future proceedings,

JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq. V.P.

IN THE CHAIR;

The Bill and a Report from the Board on its provisions having been read and considered,

It was Resolved unanimously,

1st.—That the Report now read be received and approved, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Board.

2*ndly*.—That the Board be requested to adopt all necessary measures in the further progress of the Bill for carrying into effect the objects in view, with power also to make such arrangements with the Common Council as in its judgement may be expedient.

JOSEPH COOKSON, V.P.
CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman having left the Chair, a vote of Thanks to him for his able conduct, was unanimously passed.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

The following is a Copy of the BILL now brought into the House of Commons by the COMMON COUNCIL.

6 GEO. IV.—Sess. 1825.

A BILL

To enable the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, of the City of *Bristol*, to reduce, alter, modify and regulate, certain Dues, called "Town Dues," and "Mayor's Dues," and for charging and collecting thereof.

WHEREAS the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, of the City of *Bristol*, are possessed of and entitled to certain Tolls, Duties, or sums of Money, called "The Town Dues," payable in respect of certain goods, wares and merchandizes, (being the property of persons not free of the said City of *Bristol*, nor otherwise legally exempted from the payment thereof) exported from or imported into the Port of *Bristol*, to or from Foreign Parts beyond the Seas; and also to certain other Tolls, Duties or sums of Money, payable upon certain goods, wares and merchandizes, exported from and imported to the Port of *Bristol*, Coastwise or along the Coasts of *Great Britain*:

And whereas the Mayor of the said City of *Bristol* for the time being, is possessed of and entitled to a certain Toll, Duty, or sum of Forty Shillings, for and in respect of every Ship or Vessel above the burden of Sixty Tons, navigated and coming from any Port or Place without the Port of *Bristol*, and below the Islands, called The *Stipe Holme*, and The *Flat Holme*, and brought up the River *Avon* to either of the Quays or the Back, of *Bristol*, or the Canals, Wharfs, or any other places being part and parcel of the said Port of *Bristol*:

And whereas the said Town Dues have been, heretofore and hitherto, payable and collected upon and in respect of the export and import of goods, wares and merchandizes, from and to *Bristol* and *Ireland* respectively:

And whereas the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, are desirous of relinquishing the said Coastwise Dues, and also of relinquishing the said Town Dues, so far as the same Town Dues relate to *Ireland*; and are also desirous, and it is expedient, that the said Town Dues (except so far as relates to *Ireland*,) and also the said Mayor's Dues should be reduced, altered, modified and regulated in the manner hereinafter mentioned;

May it therefore please Your MAJESTY,
That it may be Enacted; And be it Enacted by the KING's most Excellent MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, THAT from and after the the said Tolls, Duties, or sums of Money payable upon goods, wares and merchandizes, which may hereafter be imported or exported to and from the port and city of *Bristol*, coastwise or along the coast of *Great Britain*; and also the Tolls, Duties or sums of Money, called "The Town Dues," so far only as the said town dues relate to goods, wares and merchandizes, exported from *Bristol*, to any port or place in that part of the United Kingdom called *Ireland*, or imported into *Bristol* from any port or place in *Ireland*, shall cease and be no longer payable.

And be it further Enacted, That from and after the the said Tolls, Duties, or sums of Money, called "The Town Dues" and "The Mayor's Dues," as the same respectively have been heretofore payable, shall respectively cease and be no longer payable; but that in lieu thereof, the several Tolls, Duties, and sums of Money respectively set forth in the Schedules (A.) and (B.) hereunto annexed, that is to say, Schedule (A.) as and for, and in lieu of the said Town Dues, except as aforesaid, and Schedule (B.) as and for, and in lieu of the said Mayor's Dues, shall be and the same are hereby respectively substituted, and the same, except as aforesaid, shall be and are hereby respectively declared to be henceforth respectively payable to the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, and the said Mayor, for the time being respectively.

And be it further Enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty, of the said city of *Bristol*, in common council assembled, from time to time as and when they may see fit, to reduce, alter, modify and regulate, and after such reduction, alteration, modification, or regulation, again to raise and increase, and so from time to time to reduce, alter, modify, regulate and raise the rate of the said several tolls, duties, and sums of money respectively set forth in the said respective Schedules, or any or either of them respectively, so that the rate of the said respective tolls, duties, or sums of money, or of any or either of them respectively, shall not be raised or increased beyond the rate thereof set forth in the said respective Schedules.

And be it further Enacted, That upon any and every Alteration being made, the same shall be notified by advertising the same not less than in some Newspaper or

Newspapers usually circulating in the said City of *Bristol*, days at the least, before such alteration shall take effect.

And be it further Enacted, That from and after the the several tolls, duties, and sums of money, set forth and stated in the said several Schedules, and from and after any and every such alteration, the said altered tolls, duties, or sums of money, as the same may be from time to time altered in the manner herein provided for and authorized, so far as such alteration shall extend, but no further or otherwise, shall be respectively payable to the said Mayor, Burgesses, and Commonalty of the said city of *Bristol*, and to the said Mayor of the said city of *Bristol* for the time being respectively.

And be it further Enacted, That the several tolls, duties, or sums of money, comprised in the said Schedule (A.) shall not be payable in respect of such goods, wares or merchandizes, as are *bona fide* the property of, and *bona fide* exported or imported by or on account of persons free of the said city of *Bristol*, or having any other legal exemptions from the payment thereof.

And be it further Enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for the said Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty in common council assembled, to compound with the owner or owners of any ship or vessel liable to the tolls or duties set forth in the Schedule (B) for a or for any less portion of time prospectively; and upon payment of the sum agreed upon, at the time of entering into such agreement, but not otherwise, the said ship or vessel shall be and the same is hereby declared to be discharged from the tolls, duties, or sums of money, for which the same would have been liable, for and during the time covered by such composition, if such composition had not been so made.

Provided always, and be it further Enacted, That nothing herein contained shall in any manner abridge, infringe, lessen or alter any of the rights, privileges, tolls, dues, duties, powers or authorities of the Mayor, Burgesses and Commonalty of the said city of *Bristol*, or any of the accustomed rights and privileges of the said city (save only as herein is enacted;) any thing hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

And be it further Enacted, That this Act shall be deemed and taken to be a Public Act, and shall be judicially taken notice of as such, by all Judges, Justices and others, without being specially pleaded.

(Here follow the Schedules of Articles, with the Charges of Rates left Blank.)

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT

OF

The Board of Directors

MADE TO THE CHAMBER

AT A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING,

Held the 10th day of August, 1825,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

Bristol:

PRINTED BY A. BROWN, AT THE MIRROR OFFICE, SMALL STREET.

1825.

BRISTOL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT.

The Bill for reducing, altering, modifying, and regulating the Town Dues and Mayor's Dues having become a Law, your Board has convened you together for the purpose of laying before you a Report of its proceedings in reference thereto.

The Annual Report, and another presented on the 30th of March last, detail fully the communications with the Common Council, and the proceedings of your Board, up to the first reading of the Bill in the House of Commons. At this period the principal points of objection to the measure, as then proposed, were reduced to two, viz. the confirmation of Title, and the insufficient reduction in the Tolls as fixed by the Schedules; to these were added some suggestions for defining this branch of revenue, and for making the collection efficient. These requisitions the Common Council would not entertain; and it appearing to be their determination to prosecute the Bill as originally framed, your Board, acting under your resolution of the 30th of March, appointed a Deputation to watch the proceedings in Parliament, and to procure the introduction of such provisions as should give the Bill its requisite efficiency.

The Bill, in its amended state, proves the zeal and attention of the several Members of the Deputation to the arduous duty they consented to undertake, and affords the Chamber ample ground for congratulation; the preservation of the public rights having been secured, (in addition to the many improvements previously acquired), and a further and material reduction in the Mayor's Dues having been obtained.

Notwithstanding the acknowledged value to the Port of these reductions and modifications, your Board has to lament that the full portion of benefit which the measure was capable of producing, and which your Board pressed upon the consideration of the Common Council, is yet withheld; the equalization of Rates with those payable at rival Ports is yet to be accomplished; but it is to be observed, that the Common Council have the power of effecting this further reduction; and it was repeatedly promised to the Committee of the House of Commons, that, at the earliest possible period, this power should be exercised.

It would have been gratifying to your Board to report that a more cordial feeling towards the Chamber, and a disposition to consider dispassionately its requisitions, had been evinced by the Common Council. Whilst your Deputation encouraged every proposal whereby a conciliatory arrangement might have been effected, and lost no opportunity of adjusting the question upon fair principles, the Common Council, on the contrary, appear to have determined upon resisting all negociation for compromise; and your Board ventures to assume, that if it had contended with the Common Council on their right to any Dues, rather than have acted on the defensive, a more determined opposition could not have been encountered. Your Board has consequently sustained, in the lengthened proceedings, a considerable expense, and the valuable time of the Deputation was exclusively occupied for nearly nine weeks.

In explaining the causes of the protracted progress of the Bill through its several stages, and the large expenditure that has been incurred,—and in conformity also with the invariable practice of your Board in giving the utmost publicity to its transactions,—a detail of the circumstances is necessary.

The Bill having been read a second time on the 2d of May, the Deputation immediately proceeded to London to obtain the requisite amendments. The Committee of the House of Commons held their first meeting on Wednesday, the 11th of May, the Common Council and the Chamber being each represented by Counsel. The proceedings before the Committee occupied five days. On the two first days, the Common

Council ineffectually endeavoured to establish their title to the Dues, opposing strenuously the requisition of the Chamber for qualifying the Preamble. The Committee, however, upon the *ex parte* evidence of the Corporation, by an unanimous vote, inserted in the Preamble the words "*claim to be*" entitled; declaring it to be their intention to leave the question of title unaffected by the Bill. Having thus procured the determination of the Committee on this material point, it was expected that the enacting Clauses of the Bill would be altered conformably with such determination. On the third day, when the several Clauses of the Bill came under consideration, the Counsel of the Corporation opposed every amendment that was suggested to render the Bill consistent with the tenor of the Preamble; and under a threat that the Bill would be withdrawn, and under repeated assurances from the Common Council that, having obtained the power of reducing, it should be exercised, from time to time, as circumstances should permit, the remaining part of the Bill, as far as the Schedules, was passed, with the introduction only of a few unimportant words. An alteration in the Mayor's Dues was on this day also considered, and in part arranged. On the 16th the Schedule "A" was discussed; and, after considerable argument, it was determined that the Chamber should be at liberty to refer to the Rates payable at other Ports; and the Committee, requesting that a Schedule should be prepared, with copies for the Members, adjourned to the next day. The Schedule was so prepared by your Deputation; and calculations were formed of the probable produce; shewing that, under a well regulated collection, it would amount to the sum represented by the Corporation as necessary to be raised. On the following day, the Committee, when about to proceed with the examination of the Schedules, were informed by the Counsel of the Corporation, *that if the Dues were treated adversely*, they would instantly abandon the Bill; it was also stated, that the reductions made from the existing Rate, *ad valorem*, were £3000, three-fifths of the whole amount collected;—that the produce under both the Schedules would be £2100 only;—it was also urged, that the whole being *private property*, all reductions must be

considered voluntary; and that, having determined upon the Rates to be thenceforth collected, no interference from any quarter would be permitted; and that if the Schedules were to be further altered, *even by the Members of the Committee*, the Bill should be left to its fate. The Common Council also refused to produce their Books—would enter into no examination of items in the Schedule—and would not meet any individual of your Deputation, (which, though repeatedly proposed, was peremptorily refused);—in short nothing less than an unqualified submission to their views would induce them to proceed further with the Bill. The insertion of a Clause, protecting the rights of the Public against the effect of the Bill as a confirmation of Title, was urged by the Chamber, was again warmly opposed, and rejected, on the ground of its not being necessary, the Bill, as altered, providing fully against the evil apprehended; and, finally, the Committee passed the two Schedules without further inquiry or amendment, other than, at the instance of the Common Council, reducing a few of the items, which obviously *exceeded the ad valorem Rate* as collected, and confirming the extended reduction of the Mayor's Dues, as assented to on a former day.

The Bill, in this anomalous state,—in one part representing the promoters as only claiming to be entitled to the Tolls, and in another abolishing the old Dues, and declaring new Tolls to be payable without any qualification whatever,—was ordered to be forthwith reported to the House of Commons; and your Deputation immediately procured the opinion of Counsel on the legal effect of its provisions, in respect to the right of disputing the Title. Messrs. POLLOCK and BOMPASS, your advocates before the Committee, advised, that the Title was confirmed, and all right of trying the question in a Court of Law concluded. It was then objected, that nothing less than the opinion of an eminent Barrister, who had not taken any part in the proceedings, would be sufficient; accordingly, the opinion of Mr. CAMPBELL was taken, and proved equally decisive with the former. At last, on the suggestion, and with a view to remove the doubts of a warm supporter of the Common Council,

the Bill was submitted to Mr. BUTLER, with instructions to frame a Clause proper to be inserted, if he should be of opinion that the Bill did not sufficiently preserve the rights of the Public. Mr. BUTLER expressed himself decidedly convinced, that the Title would be confirmed by the Bill, as it then stood; and he framed a Clause, by which the right to question the legality of the Tolls might be reserved, without prejudice to the existing Title of the Corporation.

To this Clause the Corporation objected generally, without stating any particular reasons, or suggesting any improvement or alteration. It was also intimated, indirectly, that a perseverance in seeking the insertion of the Clause would cause the abandonment of the Bill. Your Board, at this crisis, procured the opinion of the City at large, by a Petition to Parliament, praying the introduction of a saving Clause, without which provision the Bill should not pass into a law; and the respectability and number of the signatures (3800) testified the general sense of the City.

On the 26th of May the Bill was reported; and after a suspense of sixteen days, no reason being assigned, upon repeated applications, for the extraordinary delay, the third reading of the Bill was fixed for the 10th of June. In the mean time, the Deputation tried every means of putting the Clause into a form that should be unobjectionable. The observations and suggestions of Members who were considered favourably inclined to the views of the Corporation were considered; and the Clause was materially abridged, in the hope that, so altered, no objection could be urged against it. By the powerful assistance of Mr. BROGDEN, supported by Mr. DAVIS, and by several Members representing places connected with the Port, and from which Petitions had been presented, the following Clause was, on the third reading, moved as a rider:—

"Provided always, and be it further enacted, *that nothing in this Act contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to give, grant to, or confer on the said Mayor, Burgesses, and Commonalty of the said City of Bristol, or their successors, or the said Mayor*

for the time being, any further or other title or right, or evidence of title or right, to the said several Tolls, Duties, and sums of Money hereby respectively declared to be henceforth payable to them and him respectively, by way of substitution, than they the said Mayor, Burgesses, and Commonalty, and the said Mayor respectively, now have, or, previously to the passing of this Act, had or possessed to the said respective Dues or Duties, in the room or stead of which the said Tolls, Duties, or Sums of Money are hereby respectively substituted; any thing hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding."

The Corporation strenuously opposed the insertion of this Clause; and an important public question being fixed for the same evening, the debate was adjourned to the Monday following, it being evidently the opinion of the House, in which Mr. DAVIS and Mr. BROGDEN concurred, that the insertion of the Clause was necessary to make the Bill conformable with the intention of the Committee, and that the *right to try the validity of the Dues in a Court of Law ought to be preserved.* The Deputation were anxious to accomplish this purpose, and readily availed themselves of an arrangement, proposed by Lord GRANVILLE SOMERSET and Mr. BROGDEN, for bringing your Deputation and that of the Common Council to a conference, for the purpose of amicably arranging the Clause. An appointment was fixed for Saturday, the 11th of June, at the House of Commons; and, with a view to meet the wishes of the Corporation, Mr. ADAM was consulted, and instructed to draw a Clause which might be free from all possible objection. The conference appointed was held, on which occasion your Deputation defined the principle in the following words:—

"*That the substituted Dues shall be put upon precisely the same footing, in Title and Evidence of Title, as the existing Dues, and that the Corporation shall have no better or worse Title.*"

To this no objection was urged; and Lord G. SOMERSET strongly recommended that it should be left

to Counsel, one to be named by each party, to frame a Clause conformably with the principle so defined. This your Deputation instantly acceded to; but it was objected to on the other side; and the conference, after an hour's discussion, terminated without any conclusive arrangement. On breaking up, however, at half-past five o'clock, it was promised, that if a Clause, drawn in terms the most moderate and least offensive to the Corporation, were transmitted that evening, it should be considered, any objection to it distinctly stated, and returned the following morning. Accordingly, the Clause, drawn by Mr. ADAM, with an addition to secure more clearly the existing Title of the Common Council from any prejudicial effect the Bill might have, was duly sent. During the whole of the following day, and part of the Monday, your Deputation anxiously waited the return of the Clause transmitted, or of some intimation of the Common Council's opinion thereon; in the stead of which, on Monday, at one o'clock, the day fixed for the adjourned debate, a new Clause was, for the first time, submitted, through a third person; this, on being laid before Mr. ADAM, was declared by him altogether inefficient, and the result was forthwith communicated to the Common Council. It was then proposed to them, that the Clause settled by Mr. ADAM, as transmitted on the preceding Saturday, should be substituted for the one before the House, if such arrangement would be acceptable, and would remove their objections. This was refused; and consequently no alternative was left but that of persevering with the Clause on which the debate in the House of Commons stood adjourned. This Clause was ultimately approved by the House, 52 Members voting for it, and 30 in favour of the other proposed on behalf of the Corporation. Immediately on this determination of the House being known, the Common Council announced their intention of abandoning the Bill, and gave notice to Mr. DAVIS, *that it should not be taken to the House of Lords.*

From this resolution, coupled with their preceding measures, it clearly appeared, that THE CONFIRMATION OF TITLE WAS A PRINCIPAL MOTIVE FOR PROSECUTING THE BILL; and your Deputation having now secured

their object in preventing it, their remaining duty was to guard against any prejudicial alteration being made in its future stages.

The Bill having passed the House of Commons, was, according to the rules of Parliament, carried to the House of Lords, and, on the 14th of June, was read a first time.

Notwithstanding the declaration of the Corporation, through their Solicitor, "that it was not their intention to take up the Bill to the House of Lords, and to have it read a first time, or to have it read a second time, or to carry it into a Committee," your Deputation determined to watch any proceedings which the Corporation might eventually adopt; indeed, it was intimated to them, from a quarter entitled to great respect, that such a course would be proper; and the Deputation concluded that it would not be safe to leave London till the fate of the Bill was ascertained. At this period, Mr. MUNDELL, who was engaged for the interests of Ireland, was most anxious that the Bill should pass, and he entered into active communication with the Corporation; it was a natural object with him to obtain the consent of both parties, since neither the Corporation nor the Chamber of Commerce could carry the Bill adversely; for although it was in the hands of the promoters by the general practice of Parliament, it would have been lost in the Commons had any Clause been introduced by a Committee of the Lords to which the Chamber of Commerce had a valid objection. This state of things rendered it necessary that your Deputation should be a party in any negociation. Mr. MUNDELL therefore proposed various modifications of the Clause as it passed the Commons, under the impression, as he stated, that he should obtain for them the concurrence of the Corporation; and it is to be presumed, that these modifications met with, or were supposed to meet with, the approbation of the Common Council. These modifications, failing to secure the rights of the Public, did not meet the views of the Deputation. At length the professional advisers of the Corporation appeared as taking a part in the negociation; and Mr. MUNDELL transmitted a Clause, which he stated, *was with their approval;* and intimated that the Chamber might

suggest any alterations. This Clause also had the same defect; and, on writing to Mr. MUNDELL, the same reasons were assigned for rejecting it; and he was informed, that as the Deputation were satisfied with the Clause in the Bill, it was quite unnecessary to suggest any alterations in that sent; and that there could be no difficulty in the matter, if the Corporation were desirous that the Bill should pass with a Clause founded upon a principle to which *the Town Clerk had assented.* That principle was to be found in the following paragraph, which had been read to Mr. LUDLOW, in the presence of Mr. ADAM, and to which he gave his assent:—" *The Title of the Corporation must stand upon precisely the same footing as before the passing of this Act. The Title must be neither amended nor deteriorated. In all actions, or any other legal proceedings whatever, whether the Corporation be Plaintiffs or Defendants, the Corporation must be bound to produce the same evidence, and the same evidence only, as they would have been bound to produce before the passing of this Act, so that the Public may not in any respect be benefitted or injured, or the Corporation benefitted or injured, by this Act, as to any legal proceedings in future.*" It was also suggested, that if the Town Clerk thought the Clause (as it passed the Commons) infringed this admitted principle, he ought to shew how it did so; and until that was done, and a better Clause proposed for answering the purpose above-mentioned, the Deputation would be advised to abide by the one standing in the Bill. A few days afterwards, Mr. MUNDELL proposed a reference to three Members of the House of Peers, one to be named on the part of the Corporation, another by the Irish interest, and a third by the Chamber of Commerce, with the view to adjust a Clause; but with the express intimation, that the Town Clerk *would not pledge himself to agree to any Clause which he himself should not approve.* It being apparent that no utility could result from such a meeting, the Deputation declined the proposal. The following Letter was sent as a reply:—

" *Frederick's Place, 28th June,* 1825.

" The Gentlemen of the Deputation have received your

favour of this day's date, to which I am to reply. I must confess I cannot see the utility of such a meeting as that which you propose, especially as you state that Mr. LUDLOW will not pledge himself to agree to any Clause which he himself shall not approve. Mr. LUDLOW has not to the present moment stated specifically any objection to the Clause as it stands in the Bill, and if he have any, it would be much more convenient that he should at once state his objections, and propose such alterations as he thinks fit, without giving the Noble Lords you mention the trouble of meeting on the subject. It is not necessary to reiterate the principle detailed in my last Letter, from which the Deputation cannot depart; nor need I repeat that the Clause, as it stands in the Bill, fairly carries that principle into effect; and I must candidly state to you, that this Clause having passed the House of Commons, after the most ample consideration, I cannot consent to substitute any other in its place without the authority of Counsel; and therefore any general conversation on the subject is not likely to lead to a useful result, especially after Mr. LUDLOW's refusal to give any pledge, even to abide by the opinion of others, however entitled to respect.

(Signed) "THOS. ALLAN.

"*To Alexander Mundell, Esq.*"

On the 30th of June, Mr. MUNDELL transmitted to your Deputation the Clause as it afterwards passed in the House of Lords, with an intimation that he should support it. This Clause was of a very different complexion from any that had been before offered. Your Deputation therefore lost no time in submitting it to Mr. ADAM, who was of opinion, it would sufficiently protect the rights of the Public; but he advised that the original Clause, as it had passed the Commons, should be insisted on. A Letter was therefore written to Mr. MUNDELL, informing him that a consultation had been held with Counsel upon the Clause he had sent, sanctioned by the Town Clerk, and that the Deputation could not consent or make themselves parties to any alterations or additions;—that the first sentence of the Clause proposed seemed unnecessary, being in effect a repetition of a former part of the Bill; and although the last sentence was not objectionable, and would have been agreed to if proposed at an earlier period, the Deputation did not feel at liberty to incur the responsibility

of agreeing to any matter which could endanger the Bill.

After this communication, the Corporation proceeded to the second reading; and it was referred to a Committee of the Lords. Mr. HARRISON, as senior Counsel for the Corporation, opposed your Clause, substituting that which now stands in the Bill. On that occasion, Mr. HARRISON did not think proper (although called upon by a Noble Lord) to state his specific objections to an efficient part of your Clause which applied to "Evidence of Title," but said, "This is part of the Clause forced upon us on the third reading of the Bill; I would say, if it was a question of victory, whether the Chamber of Commerce should dictate to us in the tone that has been assumed, (which shews they are ready enough to dictate where they think they are able)—I would say, we should be entitled to have a preference, and I object on that ground." On a Noble Lord of the Committee asking, whether no mode could be devised of qualifying the Clauses, and the reply of Mr. BOMPASS, one of your Counsel, that he thought he could suggest something, Mr. HARRISON proceeded to say, "My Learned Friends will be quite satisfied, if they get in words that will carry the whole of their point, and they will go back to Bristol, and say we have dictated to the Corporation; we have put in every word, and have thus driven them, with a rod held over them, to do what we pleased; if my friends get all they want, they will be satisfied." Mr. LUDLOW added, "The Corporation cannot consent to any alteration;" and Mr. HARRISON concluded with the observation, "We can go on with the Bill on no other terms than those which I have stated." The Committee-Room was cleared, and the Deputation were shortly afterwards called in and informed, that the Clause in the Bill was expunged, and that of the Corporation adopted.

The Deputation, on the Report being brought up by the Chairman of the Committee, thought it their duty to Petition the House, with a view to have their Clause restored; which Petition Lord BEXLEY presented; but his Lordship declined to take part in the discussion, not being acquainted with the circumstances of the case. On the following morning (the day

appointed for the third reading), the Deputation having obtained an interview with Lord REDESDALE, his Lordship entered into a long discussion of the Clauses; he thought all of them might have been better expressed, and drew one which appeared to answer fully the purpose. The papers were left with his Lordship, under the impression that he would suggest a Clause; and make some observations on the third reading; and, from the favourable reception the Deputation experienced, they flattered themselves his Lordship would have had leisure to do so; previously, however, to the reading, his Lordship left the House, and on retiring, informed Mr. COOKSON that he was so exhausted, he could not undertake the office. The third reading was moved by the Duke of BEAUFORT,—the Bill passed,—and was ordered to the Commons for their concurrence.

It now became a question for the Deputation to consider whether they should oppose the Bill in the Commons, and prevent its becoming a law. To assist them in determining on the subject, the opinion of Mr. POLLOCK was taken on the Clause of the Corporation; and as he concurred with Mr. ADAM in opinion, that the Clause adopted by the House of Lords would sufficiently protect the rights of the Public, the Deputation did not feel themselves warranted in further opposing the Bill, especially after Mr. DAVIS assured them that Mr. BROGDEN, himself, and other Members, were perfectly satisfied that the Clause would meet the object intended. The Deputation were not contending for mere words; and as the Corporation had been brought to adopt a Clause, although in different language, yet of the same import with that of the Chamber, it was determined that the Bill should be allowed to pass. The result is, that THE MAYOR'S DUES ARE ESSENTIALLY REDUCED, and THE TOWN DUES ARE MODIFIED AND REDUCED, although not to a degree which the interests of the Port required. However, the RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC ARE PRESERVED; the TITLE IS NOT AMENDED BY THE BILL; and the Clause, as your Counsel are of opinion, imposes the necessity of producing the same EVIDENCE OF TITLE as before the passing of the Act.

In reviewing the whole of the proceedings of the

Corporation, their conduct appears remarkable.—They professed their Title to be so good, that they required no recognition by legislative enactment. Here the Board will refer to the following extracts from the Resolutions of the Common Council, under date of the 15th March and 9th April, 1824:—

15*th March*, 1824.—"*Resolved*, That the Corporation, in framing the Bill, had no view to obtain a recognition, by legislative enactment, of any right to the Town Dues and Mayor's Dues which they do not at present possess; on the contrary, *they are fully satisfied of the validity of their Title thereto.* If they were not so, it would be *unworthy the character and respectability of a Public Body to attempt, by indirect means, to acquire a right not appearing upon the face of the Bill to be its real object.*"

"The Corporation, therefore, will not hesitate, provided the other objections stated in the Resolutions of the Chamber of Commerce can be reconciled, to consent to the introduction of a Clause in the proposed Bill* which shall restrict them from demanding or receiving any Dues which they were not legally entitled to at the time of passing the Act."

9*th April*, 1824. "If the validity of their Title could be effected, the Corporation would be the first to abandon any Claims which could not be substantiated by law; and it was on the assumption that their Title was not questioned that the Bill was originally framed. When however it was insinuated that the *Corporation sought by indirect means to obtain a confirmation, by legislative enactment, of their rights*, this Committee felt satisfied that the Corporation would *throw back with disdain* an insinuation so unworthy of the *good faith and honour* evinced by them through every stage of this preceeding. They, therefore, without a moment's hesitation, *consented to and proposed a Clause calculated to preclude the Corporation from any right not already possessed by them.*"

Notwithstanding the unequivocal character of these Resolutions, the Common Council struggled with the utmost energy against the introduction of every Clause which could leave their Title open to the same questions to which it was liable before the introduction of the Bill. They first insisted on the phrase "*entitled*" in

* The Bill here alluded to was one introduced by the Common Council in the Session of 1824, and afterwards abandoned by them.

the Preamble, and would not allow the adoption of "claim to be" entitled. The alteration was however forced upon them. When thus disappointed, they contended, that as any concession of Dues was a boon, they would not allow the public to give an opinion upon the extent of such concession. Having in the Committee obtained their Schedules, and a legislative Title to the Dues, they opposed by every effort the introduction of an efficient Clause to enable the public to dispute the Title. When the Bill had reached the House of Lords, it was for a considerable time virtually abandoned; it was only at the very last moment that they proposed a Clause which could be entertained, and it was not until the very last day on which a Bill could be read in the Lords a second time, to pass the same Session, that the second reading was moved, with a view to submit to a Clause, which although not the same in terms as that of the Chamber, answers substantially the same purpose; and when these Gentlemen were pressed in the Committee of the House of Lords for a reason why their Clause should be adopted in preference to your's, the only reply was, "*it is to give a victory.*" Had it been known that such a victory would have been acceptable, it would have been given to them at any period of the proceedings; but what description of victory is this, under which they are obliged, after every delay, and every effort upon the patience of the Deputation, to adopt a Clause which secures the public in the right of disputing their Title, and disappoints all those views which so strongly mark their proceedings? If the Corporation ever intended to propose a proper and efficient Clause, why did they not either agree to that of the Chamber, or suggest another, before the last day? Why did they put the Deputation to the great personal inconvenience of remaining so long in London, and the public to so heavy an expense? Why did they not propose the Clause originally, which they were obliged to adopt finally? In truth it may be fairly inferred from the proceedings, that *a principal object of the Corporation was to procure the confirmation of a questionable Title by a legislative enactment*, and which, by your interference, they have failed to accomplish.

A majority on a division of the House of Commons

is not the kind of success most acceptable to the Chamber, or most conducive to the interests of the City; the more desirable result would have been the bringing the Common Council to a conviction of the expediency of your views, and to a resolution of meeting the necessity of the case cheerfully and effectually. The Common Council have ample means of promoting extensively the welfare of the Port; and it is by a concentration of the several interests, and not by protracted and adverse discussions, that the improvements capable of being applied are to be best effected. For this reason, your Board views the mode by which the late advantages have been gained as a subject rather of regret than of triumph, it being far from its desire to assume to itself any particular merit, to detract from any merit of voluntary concession to which the Common Council might feel themselves entitled to lay claim, or to press the subject of relinquishment adversely, or beyond the point which the necessities of the Port require.

Your Board derives considerable satisfaction from the conviction that the perseverance and continued remonstrances of the Chamber have contributed to awaken the Common Council to a sense of the injury which prevailed, and to induce the reductions and modifications which the Bill, as passed, defines. These arrangements, although far short of what in good policy they ought to have been, will, it is believed, to the particular branches of trade relieved, produce extensive benefit; and they may be considered as an important advance towards an amelioration of the local taxation of the Port, and as a progressive step to the attainment of the primary object of your Institution, the placing the Trading Interests of the City upon a footing of equality with other places of commercial resort.

In concluding this Report your Board has peculiar pleasure in bearing testimony to the unceasing exertions, anxiety, and cool judgment, of the several members of the Deputation. The constant attention and candid line of conduct of Mr. Davis; and the firm and uniform support of Mr. Brogden, are deserving your warmest acknowledgments; and to numerous other Members of Parliament your Deputation are very greatly indebted for important services.

The additional subscriptions amount to £900. The Books remain open at the Secretary's Offices to receive the contributions of those gentlemen who may be disposed to support the Chamber. The account of expenditure will be rendered at the next Annual Meeting.

JOSEPH COOKSON, V. P.
CHAIRMAN.

Aug. 1, 1825.

At a Meeting of the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, held the 10th day of August, 1825, specially convened for receiving a REPORT from the BOARD OF DIRECTORS of the Proceedings in the Bristol Town and Mayor's Dues Bill;

JOSEPH REYNOLDS, Esq. President,
IN THE CHAIR;

It was Resolved unanimously,

1st.—That the Report now read be received, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Chairman.

2d.—That although the late alterations in the Town and Mayor's Dues are calculated to relieve the Trade with Ireland, and partially to assist the general Commerce of the City, the Chamber cannot but regret that a more extended Reduction has not been obtained, so as to place Bristol on an equality with other Ports.

3d.—That the warmest Thanks of this Meeting are due to the several Members of the Deputation to London, for their unwearied patience, energy, and industry, in supporting the particular Interests committed to their care, and for their successful protection of the Public rights.

4th.—That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Board of Directors, and the Members of the Local Taxation Committee, for their unremitting attention to their several duties.

5th.—That the Chairman be requested to convey to Mr. DAVIS the sincere Thanks of this Meeting, for his very important services in advocating the Rights of the Citizens.

6th.—That this Meeting acknowledges with gratitude the unremitting attention of Mr. BROGDEN, and the

zealous support of numerous other Members of Parliament during the progress of the Bill through the House of Commons.

7th.—That this Meeting pledges itself not to relax its endeavours to promote the general improvement of the Trade and Commerce of the Port, and it confidently relies on receiving a continued support for the attainment of this important object.

(Signed) JOSEPH REYNOLDS,
CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Board of Directors

TO

A GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 30th day of January, 1826,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL STREET.

1826.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT, &C.

YOUR Board, in conformity with the accustomed practice, will Report upon the several subjects to which its attention has been directed in the past year.

DURING the Session of Parliament, a Committee was appointed to examine the several Bills which his Majesty's Government had framed for the encouragement of Commerce, in adapting its regulations to the new circumstances induced by a transition from war and a continuance of peace. Several points affecting the Local Interests of the City were suggested to Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright, and the City is indebted to the exertions of those Gentlemen, aided by several other Members representing districts connected with the Severn Trade, for the introduction of some Special Clauses in those Bills, under which facilities have been already secured for the Coasting Trade, and which advantages will, it is believed, be yet further extended.

By the Honorable Commissioners of Excise a Deputation from your Board was favored with a long conference, at which the attention of those Gentlemen was directed to several important means of accommodation, and improved regulation.

The primary object of the Chamber, the reduction of the Local Taxation of the City, has been pursued with diligence and perseverance. In the special Reports, presented on the 30th March and 10th August last, full details are given of the proceedings which have been necessarily undertaken, and of the successful results.

Soon after the termination of the proceedings in Parliament, information was received, that the Commissioners of Revenue Enquiry had made an appointment for visiting Bristol, on the important investigation committed to their direction. The nature of this Enquiry coinciding so closely with the object of your Institution, the Directors applied themselves to the collecting every information connected with the Commerce of the City; a Memorial embracing very numerous subjects was presented to the Commissioners, and a Deputation was favored with several interviews, at which the causes operating to the prejudice of the Commercial Interests of the City, were fully explained. Of the earnest attention which the representations received from the Commissioners, the anxiety evinced to obviate, as far as their power would extend, the existing impediments, the full investigation which was entered into, and of the desire shewn to ascertain the facts adduced, your Board cannot express its acknowledgments in sufficiently strong terms. The benefits flowing from the improved regulations immediately directed by the Commissioners, are fully experienced, and you have the additional satisfaction of knowing, that his Majesty's Government is now become intimately acquainted

with the many disadvantages against which the Trade of the Port has hitherto contended.

In addition to his valuable services as Chairman of the Commission, the Chamber is indebted to the Right Hon. THOMAS WALLACE, for an obliging attempt at mediation, with a view to the establishment of a channel of free and friendly intercourse between the Public Bodies of the City. Mr. Wallace also tendered his personal assistance if it would conduce to the accomplishment of such an arrangement.

Your Board, uniting fully in the views of the Right Honorable Gentleman, appointed a Committee with full powers for carrying into effect the proposed object. The Society of Merchant Venturers adopted a similar course. The Common Council declined the proposition.

The following Documents will supply the particulars of these Proceedings.

"MERCHANTS'-HALL, Bristol, 9th Nov. 1825.

"At a Meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE, holden this day at the Common Hall, JOHN BARROW, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"The Deputation appointed at the Meeting on the 4th inst. reported, that they had on Friday last, submitted the representations settled by the Committee to the Parliamentary Commissioners, the Right Honorable Thomas Wallace, Henry Berens, Esq. and W. F. Hamilton, Esq. with whom they had had a long conference on the subject. That their suggestions had been received with great attention by the Commissioners, and they were happy to state, that from a communication which Mr. Wallace has since had with Mr. Deane, the Chairman of the Board of Customs, now in Bristol, thereon, there is every reason to believe that all the measures recommended by the Committee will be adopted.

"Mr. Osborne reported, that he had had a subsequent interview with the Commissioners on the same day at their special request; their object in desiring his attendance being, as it appeared, to confer with him on the subject of the differences between the Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce, which, in the course of their inquiry, they stated had forcibly attracted their notice. The existence of these unhappy divisions they very much deplored, and expressed to Mr. Osborne in strong terms their sense of the injurious effects which their continuance must produce on the Commercial prosperity of the city. Their sentiments on this subject, they informed him, they had taken an opportunity of communicating to Mr. Alderman Daniel, and to the Deputation who had attended them from the Chamber of Commerce; and Mr. Wallace, the Chairman, expressed his hope, that this proceeding would not be considered as an improper interference, and that it might lead to an opening for a reconciliation; indeed so deeply did he feel the importance of this object, that he had declared to Mr. Osborne his readiness to lay aside all other engagements, and to postpone his departure from Bristol for any period which might be thought necessary, if, by so doing, he could be at all instrumental in bringing about so desirable a result, being convinced, that he could in no way devote his time more usefully for the promotion of the best interests of the city.

"Mr. Osborne further reported, that in consequence of this representation he had made it his business to communicate with Mr. Daniel (who was upon the eve of departing with his family for Weymouth) and also with some leading Members of the Chamber of Commerce, and that a Meeting had consequently been held between those Gentlemen, in their individual and not in any official or representative character, in the presence of Mr. Wallace; at which Meeting, after an amicable discussion, it appeared in the result to be the general opinion of all present, that the establishment of a channel of free intercourse between the Corporation, the Society of Merchants, and the Chamber of Commerce, by the appointment of a Committee for that purpose on the part of each Body, would, in all probability, have the effect of extinguishing all existing differences,

and restoring a spirit of harmony and cordiality between all parties.

"Which Report being taken into consideration, Resolved, that this Meeting, concurring entirely with Mr. Wallace, in the importance of the object proposed by his very considerate and obliging interposition, does approve of the plan suggested, with a view to the attainment of that object, and is of opinion, that it be recommended to the Hall, that an official communication be made to the Corporation and Chamber of Commerce, that the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchant Venturers is now and ever will be ready to communicate with those Bodies upon all matters of general and local concern, and that such Standing Committee will be happy to hold conferences with Committees appointed by the Corporation and Chamber of Commerce, whenever such a proceeding may appear to be conducive to the interests of the city or port, and to concur in any measures which may tend to the establishment of a free and friendly channel of intercourse between the Bodies.

"At a General Meeting of the Society, holden in the Common Hall on the same day, John Barrow, Esq. Master, in the Chair,—The above proceedings of the Standing Committee were unanimously approved and confirmed."

"At a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held the 17th day of November, 1825, Joseph Cookson, Esquire, V. P. in the Chair.

"The memorandum of points brought before the Parliamentary Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry, and of the measures proposed to be taken by the Commissioners of Customs thereupon (as obligingly communicated to the Chamber of Commerce) having been submitted and read to the Meeting; the Chairman having detailed the substance of the several conferences with which the Deputation from the Board was favoured by the Parliamentary Commissioners, and having also explained the object and purport of his personal conference with Mr. Wallace, and subsequently with other Gentlemen, on

the advantage and practicability of establishing a channel of friendly intercourse between the Municipal Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Chamber of Commerce, with a view to a reconciliation between the several Bodies, and a cordial union of all interests in advancing the welfare of the city, which measure Mr. Wallace strongly recommended, proffering his valuable services for effecting the object; and a copy of the proceedings of the Society of Merchant Venturers, under date of the 9th instant, by which that Body, after referring to the considerate and obliging interposition of Mr. Wallace, and entirely concurring in the importance of the object proposed, expresses its readiness to communicate with the Corporation and Chamber of Commerce upon all matters of general and local concern, and that its Standing Committee will be happy to hold conferences with Committees appointed by the Corporation and Chamber of Commerce, whenever such a proceeding may appear to be conducive to the interests of the city or port, and to concur in any measures which may tend to the establishment of a free and friendly channel of intercourse between the Bodies; and the several documents having been read and considered,

It was resolved unanimously, "That this Meeting is desirous of expressing its sincere acknowledgments to the Right Hon. Thomas Wallace, Henry Berens, and W. F. Hamilton, Esqrs. the Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry, for their attention to the several communications of the Deputation from this Board, and for the important facilities and improved regulations which, through their interference, have been afforded to the trading interests of the port; and this Meeting, in acknowledging the individual services of the Commissioners, would express its high sense of the anxiety and care evinced by his Majesty's Government in constituting, for the promotion and encouragement of commerce, a Commission of such extensive and eminently useful powers, and in appointing to its direction gentlemen of so great experience and value to the country.

"That the Thanks of this Board are peculiarly due to the Right Honorable Commissioner for his kind endeavours to promote a cordiality and union of the Public Bodies; a measure the

Chamber has ever anxiously sought to accomplish, and which cannot fail, if carried into effect, to be highly conducive to the prosperity of the city.

"That the following Members of this Board do form a Committee to communicate and confer with any of the Public Bodies of the city upon all matters of general and local concern, with power to associate with themselves any Member of the Chamber, to appoint Deputations for conferences, and on the part of the Chamber to enter into any particular or general arrangements for removing the existing impediments to the trade of the port, and for affecting all other objects which may be deemed advantageous and desirable.

"Joseph Reynolds, President
Joseph Cookson, } Vice Presidents
Samuel Harford, }
Harman Visger, Sen.
Francis Fisher, Sen.
James Lean
Thomas Kington, Jun.
Artimus Cambridge.

"That from the sentiments expressed in the proceedings of the Society of Merchant Venturers, this Board feels assured of the cordial co-operation of that Society in the important object proposed, and its readiness to adopt such measures as may be found essential to the well being of the port.

"That the Chairman be requested to convey to the Right Hon. Thomas Wallace the acknowledgments of this Meeting, and that a copy of the proceedings be forwarded to the Municipal Corporation, and to the Society of Merchant Venturers.

(Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON,
CHAIRMAN."

"*Office of Revenue Inquiry,*

"DEAR SIR, *Nov. 26th,* 1825.

"I had the honour of receiving your letter, conveying to me a copy of the proceedings of the Chamber of Commerce on the

17th inst. while in the country, and only delayed to acknowledge it, till by my arrival in town, I was enabled to communicate it to those of my colleagues, to whom, in common with myself, it was addressed.

" I have now the pleasure of expressing, on their behalf, as well as my own, the sincere gratification we have derived from learning that any part of the proceedings of the Commission in the performance of its duties at Bristol, should have been such as to merit an acknowledgment so flattering from the Chamber of Commerce; and I beg you to assure the Members of that most respectable Association, that it is not only the desire of the Parliamentary Commissioners that the exercise of the powers with which they are entrusted may be conducive to the prosperity of those interests which the Chamber of Commerce represent, but they feel that in rendering it so, they shall best fulfil the intentions with which such powers were committed to them by the Legislature.

" In respect to the part of your inclosure that appears to apply more especially to myself, I beg also to assure you, that any steps I ventured to take were in full concurrence with the feelings of my Colleagues, and that we are sensible of the important benefits which cannot fail to arise from the establishment of an amicable intercourse between the Commercial Bodies of the place, and alike gratified at the disposition manifested by the recorded proceedings of the Chamber of Commerce for the promotion of it.

" I have the honor to be, &c.

(Signed) " T. WALLACE.

" *To Joseph Cookson, Esq.*
Chamber of Commerce, Bristol."

" At a Meeting of the COMMON COUNCIL of the City of Bristol, held at the Guildhall, on Wednesday the 14th day of December, 1825 :—

" A Copy of the proceedings of the Society of Merchants passed at a Meeting held on the 9th day of November 1825, was read, stating that the Parliamentary Commissioners had inti-

mated that the differences between the Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce had, in the course of their enquires, forcibly attracted their notice; and that they very much deplored the existence of those unhappy divisions, and expressed in strong terms their sense of the injurious effects which the continuance thereof must produce on the commercial prosperity of the city; and that Mr. Wallace, the Chairman of the Commissioners, had declared his readiness to lay aside all other engagements, and postpone his departure from Bristol for any period which might be thought necessary, if by so doing, he could be at all instrumental in bringing about so desirable a result; and that upon a subsequent interview between Mr. Wallace, Mr. Alderman Daniel, and some leading Members of the Chamber of Commerce, in their individual and not in their official or representative character, it appeared to be the general opinion of all present at such Meeting, that the establishment of a channel of free intercourse between the Corporation, the Society of Merchants, and the Chamber of Commerce, by the appointment of a Committee for that purpose from each Body, would in all probability have the effect of extinguishing all existing differences, and restoring a spirit of harmony and cordiality between all parties. And that it had thereupon been resolved, that the said Society of Merchants, concurring entirely with Mr. Wallace in the importance of the object proposed by his considerate and obliging interposition, did approve of the plan suggested with a view to the attainment of that object; and that an official communication should be made to the Corporation and Chamber of Commerce, that the Society is now and ever will be ready to communicate with those Bodies upon all matters of general and local concern, and that the Society would be happy to hold conferences with Committees appointed by the Corporation and Chamber of Commerce whenever such a proceeding might appear conducive to the interests of the City or Port, and to concur in any measure which may tend to the establishment of a free and friendly intercourse between the Bodies.

"A Copy of the proceedings of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held on the 17th day of November last,

was also read, whereby (after referring to the proceedings of the Society of Merchants of the 9th of the same Month :) *It was unanimously Resolved*, 'That the thanks of the Board were peculiarly due to the Right Honorable Thomas Wallace for his kind endeavours to promote the cordiality and union of the Public Bodies; a measure which the Chamber anxiously sought to accomplish, and which cannot fail, if carried into effect, to be highly conducive of the prosperity of the City, and that a Committee of the Board be formed to communicate and confer with any of the Public Bodies of the City upon all matters of general and local concern, and on the part of the Chamber to enter into any particular or general arrangement for removing the existing impediments to the Trade of the Port, and for effecting all other objects which may be deemed advantageous and desirable; and that from the sentiments expressed in the proceedings of the Society of Merchant Venturers, the Board felt assured of the cordial co-operation of that Society in the important object proposed, and its readiness to adopt such measures as might be found essential to the well being of the Port.' And the said several proceedings having been taken into consideration—

"*Resolved*,—That the thank of this House be presented to the Right Honorable Thomas Wallace for his very considerate and kind offer to interfere in the adjustment of any differences which may exist between this Corporation and any branch of their Fellow-citizens, and for the readiness which he expressed to sacrifice his own personal convenience and engagements in the promotion of so desirable an object.

"*Resolved*,—That the Thanks of this House be presented to the Society of Merchants for their communication now read, expressing their earnest desire to adopt any measures which may tend to the extinguishment of existing differences, and to restore a spirit of harmony and cordiality between the Public Bodies of this City.

"*Resolved*,—That while the House participates in the sentiments which led to the above communication, and would readily attend to any suggestions tending to allay the irritation which has been excited in the mind of the public, it cannot but

anticipate insuperable difficulties in applying the principle of negotiation and arrangement to the settlement of differences which wholly consist of hostile aggressions on the one hand upon the revenue and constitutional government of the Corporation; and on the other, of the necessary defence and maintenance of rights established by the enjoyment and usage of centuries.

"*Ordered*,—That Copies of the foregoing Resolutions be transmitted to the Right Honorable Thomas Wallace, to the Society of Merchants, and to the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce."

"At a Meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS of the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, held the second of January 1826, JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq. V.P. in the Chair;

"The minute of conferences with Mr. Wallace; the proceedings of the Society of Merchant Venturers under date of the 9th day of November; of this Board of the 17th following; and the Resolutions of the Common Council at their Meeting on the 14th December, having been severally read,—

"*It was Resolved unanimously*,—That this Board regrets that the considerate and obliging interposition of Mr. Wallace, the readiness evinced by the Society of Merchant Venturers in adopting his suggestion for establishing a free and friendly channel of intercourse between the Public Bodies of the City, and the corresponding proceedings of the Chamber should have failed in producing a beneficial influence on the measures of the Common Council; and this Board is forcibly struck with the ungenerous character of the late Resolutions of the Common Council, wherein the reasonable requisitions of the Chamber are designated as hostile aggressions, and the impolitic imposts levied on the Trade and Commerce of the City described as their revenue and right established by the enjoyment and usage of centuries;—expressions in no degree tending to allay the dissatisfaction which their misguided policy has excited in the mind of the public, or to encourage a belief that any benefit

will be voluntarily afforded in the removal of those charges and impediments which powerfully retard the advancement of the Port.

"That notwithstanding the discouraging tenor of the Resolutions of the Common Council, this Board will not depart from the principle of conciliation and temperate remonstrance which has uniformly governed its proceedings, but that it will be ever ready to confer with the Public Bodies on any measures which may tend to promote the commercial and trading interests of the city.

"That the Chairman be requested to convey a copy of the proceedings of the Common Council, and of the above Resolutions to Mr. Wallace, and that copies of these Resolutions be also sent to the Common Council, and to the Society of Merchant Venturers. (Signed)

"JOSEPH COOKSON,
CHAIRMAN."

The Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure are subjoined, and your Board has to regret, that the expensive proceedings in Parliament, rendered doubly so by the extraordinary delay on the part of the Corporation, should have not only exhausted the Fund raised for the particular purpose, but have also diminished your general resources. This sacrifice, however, to which must be added the time and exertions of the Directors, bears no proportion to the positive advantages acquired. The Mayor's Dues are materially reduced; the Town Dues are modified; and the attempt of the Common Council to obtain a Legislative Title to those charges has been wholly defeated. Results so favourable, and obtained under so great difficulties, entitle your Board to anticipate the

accomplishment, eventually, of what yet remains to be done. To this end the continuance of your aid and support is essentially necessary; it being obvious, that without the individual exertions of each Member of the Chamber, and a continuance of that liberality, which, on all occasions, has been manifested, your Board, so far from entering upon the several matters which may hereafter be presented to its notice, may be unable to pursue to a successful issue those in which it is already engaged.

Several Committees are yet employed on the subjects referred to them.

The accession of additional Members is an object peculiarly desirable.

(Signed)

JOSEPH COOKSON, V. P.

Dr. *BRISTOL CHAMBER of COMMERCE in respect of the FUND for AMELIORATING the LOCAL TAXATION of the PORT.* *Cr.*

1825.	RECEIPTS.	£.	s.	d.
Jan. 30.	To Balance of last Account under this date ...	1069	18	5
Feb. 3.	To an Arrear of the first Subscription ...	5	0	0
May 13.	To Interest on Deposit Note	13	5	9
May to Dec.	To additional Subscriptions ... £1107 10 0			
	Deduct Arrears 27 2 0	1080	8	0
31.	To Balance carried to the General Account ...	10	15	10
		£2179	8	0

Audited and Examined,
Bristol, Jan. 27, 1826.

STEPHEN PRUST.
EDWD. SLADE.
ROBT. FLETCHER.

1825.	PAYMENTS.	£.	s.	d.
May, June and July.	By Expences incurred by Members of the Deputation to London for procuring important Alterations in the Town and Mayor's Dues Bill, including Travelling Expences, Tavern Expences, during a period of two months and upwards, Printers' Short-hand Writers' and Law Stationers' Accounts, Coach-hire, and other incidental Expences	640	5	8
Dec. 21.	By Mr. Thomas Allan, of London, his Bill for Law Charges, &c.	828	19	7
	By Messrs. Dyson & Jones, Parliamentary Agents	168	15	0
	By Mr. Wintour Harris, for his Professional Attendance in London	295	1	0
28.	By Mr. Bigg ditto, and his Law Charges ...	228	13	10
	By Collecting Subscriptions ... 15 0 0			
	By Receipt Stamps, 48s. and Banker's Charges on Local Notes, 4s. 11d. 2 12 11			
		17	12	11
		£2179	8	0

1825.	RECEIPTS.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Dec. 31.	To Arrears of last year's Annual Subscriptions,	4	4	0			
	To one Arrear of Entrance	2	2	0			
					6	6	0
	To amount of Annual Subscriptions from 213 Members for the current year, at £1. 1s. each	223	13	0			
	Deduct Subscriptions in Arrear	18	18	0			
					204	15	0
	To one new Subscription and Entrance				3	3	0
	To Exchequer Bills and Interest				413	2	5
					£627	6	5
	To Balance brought down				£78	13	9

Audited and Examined,

Bristol, January 27, 1826.

STEPHEN PRUST.
EDW. SLADE.
ROBT. FLETCHER.

1825.	PAYMENTS.	£.	s.	d.
Jan. 20.	By Balance due to Treasurers	8	2	3
Feb. 9.	By Wm. Brown, for Stationary last year ...	7	0	0
15.	By Mr. Harman Visger, Jun. his payment for Calculations on Mayor's Dues	6	6	0
Mar. 8.	By John Bevan, for Stationary last year	3	13	0
April 15.	By John Thorne, for Tin Box	0	10	0
	By John W. Turpin & Co. for Bookbinding last year	3	8	1
June 10.	By J. D. Bryant, Law Stationer	4	0	0
Aug. 10.	By J. J. and B. Davis, for use of Room in Wine-street	3	3	0
Nov. 9.	By J. M. Gutch, for Statutes	6	9	4
Dec. 13.	By the Executors of the late Wm. Stock ...	0	13	6
20.	By Edw. Slade, Accountant, his charges in respect of the Schedules of Town Dues	52	10	0
28.	By Mr. Bigg, his charges and payments in respect of the Case and Opinions of Counsel, prior to the Proceedings in Parliament, Abstracts of Acts of Parliament, and Charters, and other Professional Charges	102	5	2
	By ditto for procuring Copies of Charters and other Records and Translations	42	9	8
30.	By J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings	18	17	0
31.	By Wm. Roche, Expences on Irish Petition ..	1	15	9
	By Petty Disbursements, as per Secretary's Account exhibited	28	5	7
	By Printers' Accounts, viz.—			
	J. M. Gutch £46 18 11			
	Mirror, Proprietors of . 20 2 0			
	John Mills 8 1 6			
	Mercury, Proprietor of ... 9 1 6			
		84	3	11
	By Wm. Brown, Stationer, Account for present year	3	9	1
	By John W. Turpin & Co. Bookbinding for the present year	5	14	6
	By Rent of Committee-Rooms, one year, to 31st Dec.	26	5	0
	By Job Harril, for Carpet	7	10	0
	By Fire and Laundress	6	6	0
	By Secretary, one year's Salary, to 31st December	105	0	0
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Balance brought from Account of Fund for Ameliorating the Local Taxation of the Port ..	10	15	10
	By Balance carried down	78	13	9
		£627	6	5

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, JAN. 30th, 1826.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Chamber, held this day,

JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq. V. P.

IN THE CHAIR;

A Report from the Board of Directors, referring to the proceedings of the past year, having been read,

It was Resolved unanimously,

That the Report be received and approved, and be printed and distributed under the direction of the Board.

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the President, Vice Presidents, and Directors, for their unremitting attention to the business of the Institution, and for the promptitude evinced in adopting the suggestion of the Right Hon. Thomas Wallace, for promoting a spirit of cordiality and union amongst the Public Bodies of the City.

That the Gentlemen retiring from the Board continue for the present year Members of the respective Committees to which they may have been appointed.

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Right Honorable THOMAS WALLACE, and the other Gentlemen of the Parliamentary Commission for Revenue Enquiry, for the benefits which the Commercial Interests of the

City have derived from their investigation and directions; as also to the Members for the City, for their attention to the several communications from the Board during the Session of Parliament.

That the Resolutions of this Meeting be published once in each of the Bristol Papers.

That Messrs. ADRIAN MOENS and THOMAS THORNE be requested to examine the ballot for New Directors; and that this Meeting, at the conclusion of the Ballot, do adjourn to Monday the 6th of February, at Twelve o'clock, at this place, to receive their Report, and compleat the Annual business of the Institution by the election of its Officers for the present year.

JOSEPH COOKSON,
Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him, for his able conduct therein.

LIONEL BIGG,
Secretary.

Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Board of Directors

TO A

GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 29th day of January, 1827,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS CONSEQUENT THEREON.

ALSO,

THE ARBITRATION RULE,

Passed at the Annual Meeting on the 26th of January, 1824.

J. TAYLOR, PRINTER, BRISTOL MIRROR OFFICE.

ANNUAL REPORT.

THE Board, at this Annual Meeting of the Chamber, congratulate their Fellow-Citizens on the more prosperous state of the Commercial and Trading Interests, as compared with the like period of last year; the alarm which then prevailed necessarily retarded all improvements of a local nature: the Board, therefore, hail with satisfaction the revival of confidence as more suitable to the success of their efforts, and the excitement of public interest in support of their endeavours.

The proceedings of your Board for the past year have not assumed the prominent character which the anxious question of the Town Dues gave in former years; the subjects, however, which have passed under consideration, have been numerous and important, and no opportunity has been omitted of applying the means of the Institution to the objects within its proper sphere.

Several of the Bills in Parliament, during the last Session, were brought under notice,—in particular the Bill for improving the Port of Newport, in Monmouthshire, as affecting our Channel Navigation in the charge of Tolls; the Bill for regulating the Manufacture of China, as affecting the Works in that Branch in this City and Neighbourhood; the Bill for constructing a Bridge over the Severn, at Holt, in Worcestershire, as interfering with the Navi-

gation of that River, and obstructing the free passage of Trows from this Port, and on which occasion your Board assisted in procuring an alteration in the Plan of the Bridge, whereby the objection was obviated, and which assistance has been very handsomely acknowledged by the several parties interested; the Bill for facilitating arrangements between Debtor and Creditor was discussed and maturely considered. The Bills for improving Criminal Justice, and a Bill for repairing County Halls, were brought under observation,—it being necessary to ascertain that their provisions did not extend to charge the Inhabitants of the City, in its character of a County, with the obligation to contribute, by Rates, to the purposes proposed by such Bills. Alterations, to provide distinctly against the several intended Acts bearing such a construction, were suggested to Mr. BRIGHT, who promptly interfered and procured the requisite amendments. In the Silk Importation Bill, your Board endeavoured to prevail on Government to extend the advantages of the measure to this Port. Several other Legislative measures, both of a general and private nature, affecting in some degree the interests of the City, received consideration.

" In addition to these subjects, arising from Bills in Parliament, other matters of a local nature were promoted, as tending to public advantage. A Memorial was presented to the Commissioners of the Customs, for permission to work extra hours in discharging West-India Vessels arriving late, and intended for a second voyage: the Commissioners, with that desire to consult the convenience of the public

which so decidedly marks all their measures, have made an arrangement whereby, in cases of very particular emergency, the permission of working extra hours will be now granted on due application to the Collector.

"In the contemplated removal of the Post Office, it was deemed proper to interfere, by presenting a Memorial to the Post Master General; and this timely remonstrance no doubt contributed to relieve the public from the inconvenience of such removal.

"With the Society of Merchant Venturers there has been continued communication, both with reference to the establishment of Steam Towing Vessels and the charges on the Irish Trade. The Chamber, on the first-mentioned subject, will recollect that a very minute investigation was entered into in the year 1824, and a full report made, showing the evident practicability of the measure, and the benefits which might be derived from its introduction on a proper scale. The Society of Merchant Venturers have now likewise instituted a similar inquiry,—have favoured your Board with a Copy of their Minutes, and have expressed themselves in terms coinciding with those contained in the Report before referred to. The opinion of the practicability of Towing Vessels by Steam Boats into the Bristol Channel, which the Board so confidently expressed in that Report, has been fully confirmed by the late instances. Vessels have been taken down the River under circumstances of peculiar disadvantage: the experiment, through the instrumentality of several active Members of the Chamber, has been in many instances tried, and

in each case with the most complete success; your Board are, therefore, encouraged to hope, that the prejudices which once existed are for the most part removed, and that the establishment of Boats, of sufficient power and proper construction for the purpose, will form one of the first schemes of improvement in the current year."

For some time an expectation was entertained that an exemption from the Wharfage and other Dues might be obtained for the Irish Trade of the Port, in consequence of the late Act of Parliament, for Regulating the Customs, having declared, "That all Trade by Sea, from any one part of the United Kingdom to another part thereof, shall be deemed to be a Coasting Trade, and all Ships, while employed therein, shall be deemed to be Coasting Ships; and that no part of the United Kingdom, however situated with regard to any other part thereof, shall be deemed in Law, with reference to each other, to be parts beyond the Seas, in any matter relating to the Trade, or Navigation, or Revenue of this Realm."* The Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council, in reply to a Memorial presented to them, supported in distinct terms the construction which the Board anticipated this Section of the Act of Parliament would bear, with reference to the Tolls on the Irish Trade; and upon this authority the question was raised to the Society of Merchant Venturers, who refusing to admit the claim, an arrangement was proposed, whereby all Monies paid by Members of the Chamber should be received (conditionally) to be re-

* 6 Geo. IV. chap. 107, sec. 100.

funded in the event of the decision of a Court of Law confirming the claim of exemption,—it being understood that no delay should arise in determining the point. The proposition was acceded to by the Society in a manner which afforded your Board much satisfaction. The Society, whilst they insisted on their legal rights, were disposed to meet the question fairly, and to reserve from their general Fund the Monies paid from time to time, until their right should be duly established. Before entering on a Legal discussion of this claim of exemption, a Committee, to whom the subject was referred, was advised to take the opinion of Counsel, and a Case was submitted in the first instance to Mr. F. POLLOCK, and subsequently to Mr. W. E. TAUNTON, under whose advice, with the additional view which the subject upon further consideration presented, your Board were induced to waive, for the present, the claim advanced, and to substitute in its stead, a suggestion to the Society for a reduction of their Rates on the general Trade of the Port, as a measure which would tend to promote extensively its Commercial Interests.

The following reply of the Society affords little prospect of a voluntary relinquishment by a modification of their Rates, to a scale more encouraging to the Trading Community.

(COPY.)

"At a Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchant Venturers, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday, the 8th day of December, 1826, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq., Master, in the Chair,

the Master submitted a Letter from THOS. STOCK, Esq., President of the Chamber of Commerce, dated the 8th ult. (which was communicated to the Hall on the 10th November last, the annual day for electing Officers), inclosing Copy of Resolution of the Chamber, by which Letter and Resolution it appears, that the Chamber ceases to press the Claim for a discontinuance of the Wharfage and other Dues on the Irish Trade, as a legal right; but suggests to the consideration of the Society a reduction and modification of the Rates on the general Trade of the Port, as a measure of liberality and good policy, and tending to promote extensively the Commercial Interests of the City.

Which communication being considered—

"Resolved, that the Chamber be apprised that this Committee considers the arrangement proposed to have been entered into for the conditional payment of the Wharfage Rates, on the Irish Trade, as now at an end. And with respect to the Chamber's suggestion, of a reduction of the Rates on the general Trade of the Port,—Ordered, that the Chamber be informed, that the Society, holding these Rates under a Lease from the Corporation of Bristol, for a valuable consideration, expended in the erection of Quays and Wharfs, and in other Public Improvements, of which the Trade of the Port is deriving the benefit, it does not appear to this Committee reasonable, to expect that they should consent to a reduction of Rates, without a fair equivalent in return,

and more especially as, upon the whole, these Rates appear to the Committee to be very moderate."

The waiver of the claim of exemption necessarily annulled the arrangement for the qualified payment of Irish Dues. The reasons advanced by the Society, for refusing a general reduction of the Wharfage Rates, your Board cannot admit. The Rates, it is contended, are far from moderate, and in the absence of any accounts, shewing the application from time to time of the large Revenue of the Society from the trade of the Port, the Chamber may claim to be satisfied that such Revenue is not now more than amply sufficient for the legitimate purposes for which it is raised, and the more especially, since it appears the Society exempt the several members of their body from all payments on Exports. For the support of the Quays, and improvements of the Harbour, the Trade bears three distinct species of charge, viz. the Town Dues, the Wharfage Dues, and the Dock Dues, the two former of which arise out of the same consideration; it is, therefore, intended still to press the Society for a satisfactory modification of their rates, to which end their foregoing Resolution will be referred to a Commitee.

It was repeatedly urged, by the opponents to the Chamber, that the remission and modification of the Town Dues would be depriving the City of a positive revenue for its internal improvement, without in the least tending to increase the trade of the Port; on such questions experience is the best test; it is therefore with peculiar satisfaction your Board can call your attention to the extraordinary increase in

the Irish Trade during the past year, and particularly in the Articles of Export, the greater part of which is attributable to the abolition of the Town and Mayor's Dues, and the consequent increase of communication and facilities of interchange with the South of Ireland, and which will, it is believed, be yet further improved, and thus become an almost new and at the same time highly valuable branch of trade to the City at large. The Town Dues operated as a prohibition to the export of East India and other valuable merchandize; scarcely had a chest of Tea passed through the Port: during the last year the exports in that article alone have been very considerable, and, in groceries generally, the increase has been to an even greater extent.

The Corn Laws having been brought under consideration, by a Memorial from several Members of the Chamber, a Petition to Parliament in favour of a revision was framed and presented. The question was treated as one strictly of a Commercial nature, and it being universally admitted that the present system of taking the averages is fallacious, and the Memorialists having shewn that by the present Laws they incur great uncertainty and increased risk, your Board felt warranted in the application for an alteration in the existing system with a due regard to the Agricultural Interests, whose claims to protection were pointedly recognized and proposed to be effected by the imposition of a Duty equivalent to the burthens the producers of Corn exclusively bear.

A Committee of the Board is now employed in examining some Documents, which have

been presented, relating to important improvements in the line of Road from this City through South Wales, commencing with the undertaking for making more practicable the passage across the Severn at Aust. This subject is taken in connexion with another suggestion for bringing the London Mail to this City in twelve hours. It is also contemplated to Memorialize the Post Master General for accelerating the arrival of the West Mail, so as to effect its delivery before the departure of the London Mail, a convenience of no little moment to the West India Trade of the Port, since it would save one day in the conducting all business with the metropolis; at the same time, also, it is proposed to point out to Government the eligibility of conveying the Mails for the South of Ireland by Steam Vessels from this Port. The Corporation of the City propose, as it is understood, laying out their valuable Property at Portishead for Building; they also propose making a landing place there for Passengers: some extension of the Plan by making a Pier, which, by the nature of the Ground will, it is believed, be attended with comparatively trifling expense, will afford a safe Moorage for Steam Vessels, and render them independent of the Tide. The advantages of such facility of communication would be soon experienced in the extension of Trade, which follows as a necessary consequence to increased intercourse.

From the review of these several proceedings, it will be perceived to how great a degree of utility the Institution has been and is capable of being applied. Among the many advan-

tages which the Chamber may claim to have acquired by its measures, and which the Public are now enjoying, is the abolition of the Town and Mayor's Dues on the Irish Trade, and the reduction of Rates on the Foreign Trade; the effect produced on the Irish Trade, by the removal of these charges, is demonstrative of the benefits that would flow from a more liberal application of the principle to the Foreign Trade. For this, the Chamber at the time contended,* and consequently refused its concurrence in the reduction offered by the Corporation, on the ground of its insufficiency, and the impolicy of continuing the rates on so high a scale, and this opinion is confirmed by the contrast which is presented between that portion of Trade relieved from the burthens and that which is still subject to them.

The Chamber will not fail also to recognize the facilities the Public derive from the several new regulations introduced in the Excise and Custom departments, at the instance of Mr. WALLACE, when he visited Bristol with the other Commissioners for Revenue inquiry. Indeed it cannot be denied that the exertions and perseverance of your Body, during the four years of its establishment, have contributed in no ordinary degree to effect very material improve-

* Although the question between the Chamber and the Corporation was, by the passing of the Act of Parliament, determined, so far as the Chamber considered itself called upon as a Body to interfere, yet, in fulfilment of a Pledge given, the question upon the Title of the Corporation to these Dues has been raised by a number of spirited individuals, and will, it is expected, be speedily brought to issue in a Court of Law.

ment in every thing connected with the Commercial and Trading Interests of the City, and, by a steady continuance in such a course, your Board anticipate the pleasure of yet further promoting the welfare of their fellow-citizens.

For effecting these purposes, it is essential that the number of active Members should be kept up, and that the annual income should be supported. Several highly respectable individuals have recently joined the Chamber, but the number of New Subscribers has not supplied the decrease by death and other adverse circumstances. It is therefore highly desirable to procure an accession of strength by the addition of Members, and thus prevent the possibility of any injury arising to the Institution from want of efficient Directors or pecuniary resources.

From the several Boards of Commissioners, and other branches of his Majesty's Government, the Memorials and Communications from the Chamber have received marked attention; the promptitude with which the Public business is conducted, the attention which is uniformly paid, and the disposition invariably evinced to consult, as far as is consistent with the due collection of the Revenue, the convenience of the Public, your Board recognize with peculiar satisfaction.

To Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright, our Representatives in Parliament, whose services are very frequently called into action, your Board feel themselves much indebted; the strict attention and anxiety of both those Gentlemen to forward the views of the Chamber, in the several subjects laid before them during the

past year, justly entitle them to your acknowledgments.

The Account of Receipt and Expenditure to the present time is subjoined.

(SIGNED)

THOMAS STOCK, *President.*

It not being fully known that one of the advantages the Institution offers to its Subscribers is the assistance of the Board in undertaking References on subjects of private dispute, the regulations for this purpose are here introduced.

ARBITRATIONS.

Rule 12.—That in cases where a difference shall arise upon any matter relating to Trade or Accounts, between persons, one or both of whom shall be Members of the Chamber, and the parties are desirous of submitting the matter to the decision of an Arbitration, under the direction of the Board, the same shall be received; subject, nevertheless, in each case to the discretion of the Board.

In order to such a proceeding, the parties shall state in writing the subject matter of the dispute to the Standing Committee or the Secretary, who shall submit the same to the Board of Directors at the next Monthly Meeting, or at a Special Meeting.

At such Meeting the Board shall proceed to Elect (by ballot) five of its Members, as a Deputation for the Arbitration; which number shall be reduced by each party in difference striking out one name, and the remaining three Directors shall then undertake the Arbitration.

Instruments of reference, to be approved by the Arbitrators, shall then be executed by the respective parties; such instruments reserving a power of compensating the Arbitrators for their time, and also a power of moderate extension of the time for the determination of such difference; but, previously to the availing themselves of such power of extension, the Arbitrators shall report in writing their reasons to the Board, and obtain its sanction to such delay,—and for this purpose the Arbitrators shall have power in every case to extend the time for their decision until the next Monthly Meeting of the Board.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

Dr. *The Bristol Chamber of Commerce in respect of the General Fund in Account Current.* *Cr.*

		£	s.	d.
1826	To Balance in Treasurer's hands, as per last Report	78	13	9
to	To 7 Arrears of Annual Subscriptions for 1825 ..... 7 7 0			
1827.	To 1 Arrear of ditto, 1824 ..... 1 1 0	8	8	0
	To Arrears of Subscription in aid of the Amelioration Fund	21	1	0
	To Amount of Annual Subscriptions received from 186 Members for the current Year (8 Subscriptions are in arrear)	195	6	0
	To four Donations to the General Fund	9	17	0
	To four New Subscriptions and three Entrances ..	10	10	0

Audited and Examined,
Bristol, January 21, 1827.

ROBERT FLETCHER.
J. E. NASH.
EDWARD SLADE.

£323 15 9

Jan. 1827.—By Balance brought down £98 13 1

		£	s.	d.
1826	By William Brown, for Stationery	2	5	8
to	By J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings	18	7	0
1827.	By J. W. Turpin, Binding, &c. Sessional Papers for 1825 and 1826, 62 Volumes	15	11	6
	By Printers' Accounts, viz.—			
	J. M. Gutch 15 18 6			
	Mirror, Proprietors of 2 16 0			
	John Mills 1 4 0			
	T. J. Manchee 1 11 0			
		21	9	6
	By Petty Disbursements, as per Secretary's Account exhibited	6	6	3
	By Rent of Committee Rooms to 31st Dec	26	5	0
	By Fire and Laundress	6	6	0
	By Secretary, one Year's Salary to 31st Dec.	105	0	0
	By Mr. Fletcher, Accountant, for Postages and Expenses in procuring certain Papers from Liverpool	1	10	3
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Mr. Bigg, his Payments in Fees to Counsel, &c. for the two Opinions on the Question of the continuance of the Wharfage and other Dues on the Irish Trade	11	11	6
	By Balance carried down	98	13	1
		£323	15	9

Commercial Rooms, January 29th, 1827.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Chamber, held this day,

THOMAS STOCK, Esq. President,

IN THE CHAIR :—

A Report from the Board of Directors referring to the proceedings of the past year having been read :—

It was Resolved unanimously,

1.—That the Report now read be adopted, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Board.

2.—That the considerable increase in the Irish Trade, and the other advantages which the Chamber by its decisive and active measures has contributed to secure for the City at large, afford this Meeting peculiar gratification, since they prove distinctly the utility of the Institution, and the accuracy of those principles by which its proceedings have been governed.

3.—That the thanks of this Meeting are peculiarly due to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors, for their unremitting attention to every subject calculated to affect the Public Interests of the City, and for their zealous endeavours in promoting the numerous objects detailed in their Report.

4.—That the Chairman be requested to convey to R. H. DAVIS and HENRY BRIGHT, Esqrs. our Representatives in Parliament, the acknowledgments of this Meeting, for their exertions in forwarding the views of the Chamber on all subjects in which their assistance has been solicited during the past year.

5.—That this Meeting be adjourned to Monday next, the 5th February, at Twelve o'clock, at this place, to receive the Report of the Scrutineers upon the Ballot and to elect the Officers of the present year.

6.—That the foregoing Resolutions be published once in each of the Bristol Papers.

THOMAS STOCK, President.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE

Bristol Chamber of Commerce,

1828.

Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO

A GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 28th day of January, 1828,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

Bristol:

PRINTED BY T. J. MANCHEE, 30, QUAY.

REPORT.

IN reviewing the proceedings of the past year, your Board have the satisfaction of feeling that the objects of the Chamber have been promoted, and the Commercial Interests of the City advanced, as far as circumstances have presented opportunity.

The attention of the Board has been engaged on numerous important subjects:—A Committee was formed for the purpose of considering and effecting some alteration in the Quarantine Regulations, which, as regards Vessels arriving from Odessa, were found highly inconvenient. Committees were also held on the Bills brought into Parliament, for the consolidation and amendment of the Laws relating to the revenue of Excise on Malt, for amending the Laws relating to the Customs, and for consolidating and amending the Laws relating to the collection of the revenue of Excise; these several important Bills were submitted to the consideration of those Members whose trades would be principally affected; and thus, at a very early period, they were enabled to ascertain the nature and extent of the measures proposed by Government. Several other Bills were minutely examined and considered.

On the Memorial presented to the Postmaster

General, suggesting Bristol as a station for the conveyance, by Steam-vessels, of the Mails to the South of Ireland, for the acceleration and earlier delivery of the London Mail, and for expediting the West Mail, so as to effect its arrival before the departure of the London Mail, the President obtained a conference with a leading officer of that department. The establishment of a direct Western Mail, the alteration of time in the London Mail, and earlier delivery, are proofs of the disposition of the Postmaster-General to consult the accommodation of the public.

To the repeal of the Receipt Stamp Duty your Board have devoted considerable attention. The very general evasion of the duty, its comparative inadequacy as a source of public revenue, and the gross inequality with which, if rigidly enforced, it would bear on the trading community, render it peculiarly a subject of interest and importance; whilst the numerous instances of informations recently filed show the risk incurred by a disregard of the law, and awaken the public to a sense of the danger attending it. The severe operation of this duty on several particular branches of trade, the impossibility of enforcing a due observance of the law, and the odium attached to the means of punishing a neglect, will be strongly urged upon the consideration of Government. The Board feel they cannot better promote the interests of their fellow-citizens than by applying their best exertions to obtain a repeal of this obnoxious and vexatious duty.

In addition to the foregoing subjects, your Board have been occupied on one more imme-

diately of a local nature; the obtaining a revision of the Wharfage, &c. Dues. The proceedings herein, which, too voluminous to be embodied in this Report, are subjoined, will inform you the grounds on which the claim is founded, and on which it is resisted. At a very early period after the Chamber was founded, these Dues were brought under consideration as a principal feature of the local taxation of the Port. The Town Dues, as the more prominent evil, were first selected for remedy; that point being disposed of so far as the Chamber felt it necessary to prosecute, this subject, as next in importance, was taken up, and your Board anticipated that, from the sentiments expressed by the Society of Merchant Venturers with reference to the Town-Dues, and the peculiar circumstances attending the origin and continuance of these dues, some arrangement might have been effected to the satisfaction of all parties. In the Report of last year were detailed the proceedings attending the endeavour made by the Board to induce the Society to relinquish the dues on the Irish trade; this being refused, your Board, finding that the dues were originally granted by Charter for especial purposes, requested from the Society a statement of their annual receipt from this source of revenue for the last twenty years, and of the application of moneys so received, no doubt being entertained but that the account when obtained would show a receipt, in each year, far exceeding any expenditure for the specific purposes of the grant, and, consequently, that a large annual surplus must arise and remain unappropriated. The Society objected to render the account, or enter into any

explanation of their receipts, or application of income, as requested; whereupon your Board, anxious to avoid a collision with that body, memorialised it for a revision of the dues, in the nature of a voluntary concession. This requisition was also refused, on the ground that, as their right to the receipt rested on some Lease from the civic Corporation, the Society were entitled to derive every advantage arising from the increased produce of the rates; and that, as between themselves and the civic Corporation, the whole receipts were the private property of the Society, subject only to those payments and engagements which they had undertaken to fulfil. By setting up this subgrant from the civic Corporation, the Society have in effect referred the Board to that body, who, holding the property in their character of Trustees, had no power, as your Board feel, to dispose absolutely of the fund without regard to the duty of applying it, solely and specifically, for the purposes of its original creation. Uninfluenced by considerations of a public nature, and treating the property as one of private emolument, the Society insist on continuing these onerous Rates on the present scale, denying the expediency of a reduction. On every principle of justice, the requision of the Chamber ought to have been granted; but the Society are aware they are protected by an Act of Parliament, which was obtained under the pretext of regulating the collection of these Rates, but in reality for a confirmation of them, and at a time when no independent body was established to protect the Commercial Interests. The effect of the original Charter having been thus destroyed by a legislative enactment, the only

appeal is to the same tribunal. The present is not considered the most eligible period for engaging the Legislature in an inquiry of a local nature; at the same time the Board is desirous of impressing upon the Chamber its sense of the injustice the City suffers at the hands of the Society and the civic Corporation, in the continued collection of these dues to their full amount; and it relies that, so soon as the favourable opportunity shall arrive, the subject will be prosecuted with energy.

Your Board, amongst its other duties, have appointed arbitrators in several questions wherein their interference has, under the Rules of the Institution, been requested.

In the Regulations of the Chamber one alteration appears desirable. On its original formation a sum of £2. 2*s*. was fixed as payable on the admission of each Member. A fund of £400 and upwards was, by this means, created as a general stock; which, with an additional amount, was consumed in the protracted struggle with the civic Corporation for protecting the rights of the Public, under the Town Dues' Bill. The payment, under the altered circumstances, being an obstacle to the accession of new Members, it is proposed to alter the Rule, by limiting it to the Annual Subscription of One Guinea; the acquiring new Members, who will take interest in the measures and assist in discharging the duties of the Institution, being the paramount consideration.

The beneficial effects to the Irish Trade from the abolition of the Town Dues become every day more apparent; the extensive increase in both exports and imports to and from Ireland diffuses a general benefit, and is of itself suffi-

cient to compensate for the labour and expense incurred by the Chamber in producing such a result.

The account of Receipt and Expenditure is subjoined.

The Board are desirous of acknowledging the services rendered by our Members in Parliament, in the several matters referred to them in the past year.

The Correspondence relative to the Wharfage, &c. Dues, between the Society of Merchant Venturers and the Committee on Local Taxation, appointed by the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce :—

"At a Meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF MERCHANT VENTURERS, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday, the 8th of December, 1826, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"The Master submitted a letter from Thomas Stock, Esq. President of the Chamber of Commerce, dated the 8th ulto., (which was communicated to the Hall on the 10th November last, the annual day for electing Officers) inclosing Copy of a Resolution of the Chamber, by which Letter and Resolution it appears that the Chamber ceases to press the claim for a discontinuance of the Wharfage and other Dues on the Irish Trade, as a legal right; but suggests to the consideration of the Society a reduction and modification of the Rates on the General Trade of the Port, as a measure of liberality and good policy tending to promote extensively the Commercial Interests of the City.

"Which Communication being considered,

"*Resolved*, That the Chamber be apprised that this Committee considers the arrangement proposed to have been entered into, for the conditional payment of the Wharfage Rates on the Irish Trade, as now at an end; and with respect to the Chamber's suggestion of a reduction of the Rates on the General Trade of the Port, Ordered, that the Chamber be informed that the Society holding these Rates under a Lease from the Corporation of Bristol, for a valuable consideration expended in the erection of Quays and Wharfs, and in other public improvements, of which the Trade of the Port is deriving the benefit, it does not appear to this Committee reasonable to expect that they should consent to a reduction of the Rates without a fair equivalent in return, and more especially as, upon the whole, these Rates appear to the Committee to be very moderate."

"At a Meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, held the 2d of April, 1827, HENRY BUSH, Esq. V.P. in the Chair.

"The Board having resumed the consideration of the Resolution of the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchant Venturers, under date of the 8th of December last, wherein, &c. (recapitulating the foregoing Resolution) :—

"*It was Resolved*, That the Society be requested to favour this board with an account of the gross receipts annually, since the year 1807, from the Rates of Wharfage, Cannage, and Plankage, and also of Anchorage, and Moorage, with a particular application in each year of the Moneys so received, it being important that the Chamber should distinctly know the extent of expenditure by the Society during this period of twenty years, in erecting and maintaining Quays and Wharfs within the Port, as compared with the Moneys received. (Signed)

"HENRY BUSH, Chairman."

"At a Meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF MERCHANT VENTURERS, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday the 6th day of April, 1827, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"The Clerk submitted a Letter received from Mr. Lionel Bigg, dated the 3d instant, inclosing a Copy of a Resolution of the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, by which it appears, &c. (recapitulating the foregoing document.)

"Which being taken into consideration,—

"*Resolved*, That it appears to this Committee expedient, before they come to any Resolution upon the subject, to ascertain the ulterior object of the Chamber in obtaining the information they seek; and more especially whether any intention exists of bringing into discussion the Title of the Society to the Rates in question; or, if such be not their object, then on what grounds the Chamber considers the information requested to be of importance, and with what view, and for what ulterior object it is desired.

"*Resolved*, Therefore, that the Chamber of Commerce be requested to favour the Society with distinct and specific information on the points suggested in the foregoing Resolution."

"At a Meeting of a COMMITTEE OF THE BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON LOCAL TAXATION, held the 11th of April, 1827, THOMAS STOCK, Esq. President, in the Chair.

"The Secretary submitted a Letter from Mr. R. B. Ward, enclosing a copy of a Resolution of the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchant Venturers, dated the 6th of April instant, (as above.) Which being taken into consideration,

"*It was Resolved*,—That the ulterior object of the Cham-

ber is to effect a revision and reduction of the Wharfage Rates, which, taken in connection with other local charges of the Port, are onerous and highly prejudicial.

"That this Committee admits the right of the civic Corporation to the receipt of Dues for constructing and maintaining the Wharfs and Quays of the Port; and it is not disposed to question the title of the Society, as claiming under the Corporation; but this Committee considers that the Dues are held for the sole and especial purpose of constructing and maintaining Wharfs and Quays within the Port, and are only applicable to such object; and since it is within the knowledge of the Committee, that the receipts, under the provisions of the Act, 47 Geo. III. have been considerable, and that the improvements and repairs to the Wharfs and Quays of the Port, at the cost of the Society, have not, during the last twenty years, been of an extent to occasion material disbursements, it is presumed that a large excess of receipt will appear to have accumulated. On these grounds the Chamber requests to be favoured with the account of annual receipt and expenditure.

That, under any circumstances, it appears to this Committee to be no other than a reasonable proposition, that the Society should supply to the Chamber, constituted as it is of a large proportion of the trading community, paying such rates, an account of the receipts and appropriation of moneys so raised; and, in making the request, the Committee would be understood as desirous of obtaining the statement from the Society, in courtesy, in preference to any other means that might be resorted to.

"That the foregoing Resolutions be forwarded to the Society of Merchant Venturers.

(Signed) "THOS. STOCK, Chairman."

"At a Meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF MERCHANT VENTURERS, holden in

their Common Hall, on Friday, the 4th day of May, 1827, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"The copy of a Resolution, passed by the Committee on Local Taxation of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, on the 12th ultimo, was submitted, stating, &c. (recapitulating the contents of the above Resolution). Which being taken into consideration :—

"*Resolved*,—That inasmuch as it now appears, that the ulterior object of the Chamber of Commerce is to effect a reduction of the Wharfage Rates, held by the Society of Merchants under the Corporation of Bristol; and that it was for the purpose of endeavouring to enforce that ulterior object against the Society, that the information demanded by their Resolution, of the 2d of April last, was sought to to be obtained, this Committee is decidedly of opinion, that the Society have no alternative but to resist, *in limine*, a demand made upon them for a purpose so hostile to their rights and interests. Without, therefore, entering into any formal refutation of the principles advanced by the Chamber of Commerce in justification of so extraordinary a requisition, which, however, the Committee wholly deny, they deem it quite sufficient, on the present occasion, to recommend to the Society that a compliance with the application be refused, and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Chamber of Commerce accordingly."

"Merchants' Hall, Bristol.

"At a GENERAL MEETING of the Society, holden on Friday, the 25th day of May, 1827, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair,

"The foregoing Resolution of the Standing Committee, passed on the 4th instant, was approved and confirmed.

"By Order of the Society,

"JERE OSBORNE, Clerk."

"At a Meeting of the COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON LOCAL TAXATION, held the 28th of June, 1827, THOMAS STOCK, Esq. President, in the Chair.

"A Resolution of the Standing Committee of Merchant Venturers, dated the 4th day of May last, and subsequently confirmed by the Hall, was read, (recapitulating the contents of the above Resolution.)

"And, the same being discussed, the following reply was agreed to :—

"In considering this Document, the Committee are unable to account for the Society attributing to the Chamber of Commerce an intention of hostility in seeking a reduction of the Wharfage and other Rates, to such an extent as may be warranted by the excess of the present produce above the expenditure. The Society have been already assured that the Chamber did not propose questioning the Title of the Corporation to these Dues; the Society were applied to, as the receivers and Stewards of the Tolls, to effect a reduction by their influence with the Civic Corporation; the grounds on which the Chamber deemed that such a request might be made were distinctly stated; and throughout the whole proceedings so far from the Chamber exhibiting a spirit of hostility, its requisition has been urged upon the Society in the nature of a voluntary concession, and the relief requested has been limited to a reduction corresponding with the excess of income; the accounts were solicited to enable the Chamber to ascertain the extent of such excess, that an accurate judgment might be formed of the degree of reduction the Tolls would prudently bear.

"It was not deemed necessary to admit into the consideration of the subject the terms of the contract between the Society and the Civic Corporation; by the Act of Parliament, the Tolls are granted to the latter Body, and it is upon that body the obligation of an equitable appropriation

of the Revenue arises, without reference to any third person to whom the property may be granted: but since the Society claim to have a direct interest, and, consequently, the power of reduction independent of the Civic Corporation, an additional ground is afforded to the Chamber for urging a compliance with its requisition.

"Whether, on a strict interpretation of the Act of Parliament, these Dues can be adjudged to be applicable to specific purposes, it is not material now to discuss; it is, however, quite clear that, in the original Charter, the Dues were granted for the express purpose of maintaining and repairing the Quays and Wharfs of the Port; it is equally clear, that the past and prospective expenditure for that purpose was the chief motive for the Legislature establishing the Dues; and it also appears that the circumstances of the Civic Corporation collecting, as owners of the Port, other Tolls was not disclosed, except so far as may be collected from the saving clause, wherein no reference to the Town Dues is to be found. It is sufficient, the Committee conceive, in treating with an association constituted as that of the Society, to show that, on principles of Commercial Policy, the requisition of the Chamber is reasonable and just.

"In stating this principle the Committee beg to refer the Soci ety to a Document emanating from their own body, which contains a forcible exposition of true commercial policy, in a case bearing close analogy with the present question. In a Report of the 1st Nov. 1823, the Society thus express themselves. "These charges, meaning the municipal imposts, your Committee feel bound to state, are in their judgment objectionable in principle, as being in effect exactions for which no equivalent is rendered. All taxes on trade, where trade derives no remuneration, are in their very nature injurious."

"The terms here quoted are peculiarly apposite; to the trade of the Port of Bristol no *equivalent* for the large

amount annually raised by the Wharfage and Anchorage Rates is, the Committee apprehend, rendered; the benefit derived bears no proportion to the degree of taxation; and it is on this principle, that the Chamber considers it may fairly claim, not an abolition of the Dues, but a general reduction to such extent as may correspond with the excess of present income above the expenditure for the purposes of trade.

"Entertaining such sentiments as those referred to, it would be an act of injustice to the Society, to anticipate they have altered their views, or would be deterred from acting upon them, by reason of their possessing a right or interest in the property. The Society, on that occasion, acted with a degree of candour and liberality, highly creditable to so respectable a Body; and the Committee sincerely hope the Society will not, by any erroneous impression of hostility on the part of the Chamber, be now induced to withdraw from their consideration of this subject those principles of equity and true policy which have already conduced to the advantage of the City, and which, by a continued application to the reduction of local taxation, will powerfully contribute to secure those advantages which the situation of the City, the improvement of its Port, and the opulence of its inhabitants are calculated to command.

(Signed) "THOMAS STOCK, Chairman."

"At a Meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY OF MERCHANT VENTURERS, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday, the 6th day of July, 1827, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"A Resolution of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce on Local Taxation, passed on the 28th ultimo, in answer to the Resolution of this Committee, of the 4th

of May last, was read, in which, &c. (recapitulating the contents of the Resolution)—

"Which Resolution being now taken into consideration:

"This Committee, in the first place, derives much gratification from the assurance it contains, that the Chamber of Commerce had no intention of hostility towards the Society; still, however, this Committee cannot help thinking that the Chamber, seeing they had no hostile proceedings in view, have been rather unhappy in the manner of their application; their Resolutions being, certainly, calculated to produce a contrary impression: but it is quite sufficient that they disclaim all such intention. And this Committee has, therefore, only to express its regret that the misconception should have taken place.

"With regard to the reasoning upon which the concession demanded of the Society is urged, it appears to this Committee to be altogether irrelevant, being formed upon false premises. The Dues in question do not, in fact, come within the principle laid down by the Society of Merchants, in the extract from the Report of their Committee, quoted against them by the Chamber of Commerce. They are not Charges for which no equivalent or remuneration whatever is rendered; which is the case assumed and argued upon in that Report. On the contrary, the Chamber of Commerce is itself obliged to admit, that these Dues were originally granted for a valuable consideration, the maintenance and reparation of the Quays; to which, of course, must be added their original construction. Nor is it any answer for the Chamber of Commerce to object that they have, in the course of time, by an increase of trade, or other causes, become more than an equivalent for the duty in respect of which they were imposed (supposing that to be the case), and that, *therefore*, they ought to be reduced. Such an argument can have no force at all, unless the Chamber are prepared to concede the converse of the proposition, and to

admit that, if the case had been reversed, and the Dues had fallen short of the expenditure, they would have been equally ready to agree to their augmentation. But it requires but little penetration to foresee in what manner any application, for that purpose, would have been received by the Chamber, more especially if it had been claimed as a right, and urged in the style of a requisition. The charge, therefore, of inconsistency, which the Chamber would infer against the Society, founded upon the supposed opposition between their present refusal and the principle stated in their former Report, falls to the ground, the cases not being parallel. And this indeed is so obvious, that this Committee would scarcely have thought it necessary to insist upon it, if the objection had not been advanced in a tone of confidence, which seemed to imply a belief that it would be received as unanswerable. And here the Committee are led to notice, that this is not the first time that the communications which they have been induced to hold with the Chamber of Commerce, upon matters of public interest, have been subsequently brought forward against them by that Body, and unwarranted inferences attempted to be drawn therefrom. A similar attempt was made and refuted about three years since; and the Committee are the more disposed to lament such a practice, as it must necessarily tend to discourage that unreserved freedom of intercourse between the two Bodies, which it was understood to be the wish of the Chamber to establish, and which the Society have always been disposed to cultivate with all classes of their fellow-citizens.

"Upon the whole, the Committee have not been able to discover any reason for altering their opinion of the present application. The requisition made upon the Society for a return of the receipts and application of their revenues, arising from the Dues in question, must, they conceive, in whatever light viewed, be considered as a most

extraordinary demand, and such as can be justified upon no grounds either of law or equity. They have, therefore, only to repeat their former recommendation to the Hall, that it be declined."

"Merchants' Hall, 6th July, 1827.

"At a GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY, holden this day, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"The foregoing Resolution of the Standing Committee was unanimously approved and confirmed.

"By Order of the Society,

"JER. OSBORNE, Clerk."

"At a Meeting of the COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON LOCAL TAXATION, holden the 4th of August, 1827, THOMAS STOCK, Esq. President, in the Chair.

"The Secretary read a Resolution of the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchant Venturers, dated the 6th of July last, subsequently confirmed at a General Meeting of the Hall, in which, &c. (recapitulating the contents of the Resolution)—

"Which Document being considered, the following reply was agreed to, and ordered to be transmitted.

"The explanation of the Society, as to the misconceived intentions of the Chamber, this Committee receives with satisfaction. It is the desire of the Committee, that an amicable feeling between the two Bodies may be allowed to continue; but this avowal must not be understood as precluding the Chamber from pursuing another course, if such a necessity should be forced upon it.

"In considering the reply of the Society as an answer to the arguments of the Chamber, in support of its requisition for a reduction of these Dues, this Committee is compelled to protest against the reasoning it contains, as establishing in any degree a justification for the conclusion at which the Society arrive. It is, in the first instance, contended by the Society that the principle laid down in the extract quoted from their Report, of 1st Nov. 1823, does not apply to the Dues in question,—"u ch Dues not being charges similar to the Town Dues, for which no equivalent or remuneration is rendered." Between the two cases a slight shade of difference arises; but it appears to this Committee, that the principle still applies with equal force. In the case of the Town Dues, the benefit to trade was the protection afforded in the Civil Government of the City; in the present case, the benefit afforded is in the regulation of the Pilots, and in the appropriation of a small sum annually for purposes incidental to the Port. This partial appropriation does not prevent the principle applying to these Dues; it serves only to the extent of the *amount* appropriated. An equivalent means a remuneration or benefit *to the full value;* and it is impossible to admit the accuracy of any reasoning, whereby the application of a fractional part of a Revenue is to be deemed an equivalent for the receipt of the whole sum. The Society, moreover, express themselves generally; the phrase used is, "*All taxes* on trade, where trade derives no remuneration, are in their very nature injurious." And it may be fairly taken to apply to every species of Toll, and to mean no *corresponding* remuneration. In this view the Committee considers itself entitled still to contend, that, if the annual sum raised from the Wharfage and other Dues is more than sufficient to meet their average proper expenditure, the Society do not allow themselves to be governed by the principle avowed by them, unless they reduce the rates to such an extent as may make the receipt correspond with

such expenditure. The accumulating a sum of money for no definite purpose, and the continued receipt of Tolls of larger amount than the necessity requires, cannot be supported on any principle of justice; consequently, the requisition to the Society for a reduction is not unreasonable, nor, when the other Charges of the Port are considered, can it be deemed uncalled for. Nor does the admission of the Chamber, that these Dues were originally granted for the maintenance and reparation of the Quays, affect the requisition. They were originally granted to the Civic Corporation for a specific purpose, with an intention that trade should have an equivalent for the charge; it therefore necessarily follows, that the fund cannot properly be otherwise applied. THE RIGHT of collecting these Dues for moneys expended in *constructing* Wharfs and Quays, in addition to the repairs, this Committee has no objection to consider, if the Society are disposed so far to extend the question. Hitherto the Chamber has confined its views to the future, abstaining altogether from any claim upon the Funds of the Society, in respect of the large sum which even since the date of the Act of Parliament must have accumulated, using it only as an argument against the continuance of the Tolls to the full amount. The claim, to be available, must be for some unliquidated debt, existing at the present time; and judging from the improvements within the last forty years, at the expense of the Civic Corporation, as compared with the large annual Revenues derived by that body from the trade of the Port, this Committee is persuaded any sum, which can ever have been expended in constructing Wharfs and Quays, must have been repaid; and, consequently, that no claim, in that respect, can be brought to bear on the present question.

"It is further contended by the Society, that the Chamber is not competent to claim a reduction of the Dues, on account of their having become, by increase of trade or other causes, more than equivalent for the Duty in respect

of which they were imposed, unless the converse of the proposition be conceded; namely, that, if the Dues had fallen short of the expenditure, the Society would have been entitled to augment them. The principle involved in the converse of this proposition, this Committee will admit. If money be wanted for a legitimate useful purpose, and is to be applied under due regulations, it ought to be raised. On a reference to the Charters under which these Dues have been levied from time to time, the Society will doubtless discover that the Dues have been augmented since their origin. To remove, however, all doubt from the minds of the Society, this Committee feels no difficulty in stating that, in any instance in which, for advancing the interests or increasing the accommodation of the Port, it may become necessary to raise, from the absence of a specific Fund, moneys to defray the expenditure of the undertaking, the strenuous endeavours of the Chamber will be applied in promoting the object. The mercantile and trading interests of the City have zealously supported every means for improving the Port: the plan for constructing the Floating Harbour was carried into execution wholly by the efforts of the public; and a similar spirit will continue to prevail so long as the measures of public Bodies are governed by principles of liberality and true policy. Nothing is more calculated to check this spirit than the argument of the Society, that, where funds have been granted for an especial purpose, they can fairly be continued when the purposes have for the most part been accomplished, and when the receipt to the full extent is no longer necessary. Each review of the subject impresses this Committee more strongly with the feeling that the public may equitably claim a reduction of these Dues; and to this point, waiving for the present the requisition for the accounts, the Committee must be allowed still to press the consideration of the Society.

"Having thus observed upon and answered the leading points in the last Reply of the Society, it remains only

to this Committee to repeat, respectfully, its request that the Society will, with all convenient speed, review and modify the Wharfage and other Dues, reducing them to such extent as may bring the revenue to an equality with the average annual expenditure for the exigencies of the Port.

(Signed) "THOMAS STOCK, Chairman."

"At a Meeting of the STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE MERCHANT VENTURERS, of the City of Bristol, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday, the 14th day of September, 1827, PHILIP PROTHEROE, Esq. Master, in the Chair.

"The following Reply, to a further communication from the Chamber of Commerce, received since the last Monthly Meeting of this Committee, was settled and approved, and, if confirmed by the Hall, resolved that it be forwarded to the Chamber of Commerce.

"A Resolution of the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce on Local Taxation, passed on the 4th, was read, in which, after repeating their former arguments in support of the equity of their claim, they waive, for the present, their requisition for the Society's accounts, and confine their application to a request, 'That the Society will, with all convenient speed, review and modify the Wharfage and other Dues, reducing them to such extent as may bring the revenue to an equality with the average annual expenditure for the exigencies of the Port.'

"As it must be evident that any longer protraction of a discussion, so conducted, can answer no useful purpose, the Committee have determined that their present Reply shall be as concise as the occasion will admit, and they mean it to be final.

"The Chamber have been already informed, in the course of this discussion, that the Dues in question are held by the Society under a Lease from the Corporation of Bristol, granted for a valuable consideration, namely, 'the construction and maintenance of Quays and Wharfs, and other public improvements, of which the trade of the Port is deriving the benefit;' and, in refutation of the so often asserted equity of their pretensions, it was argued, in the last Resolution of this Committee, that the Chamber could not, with any consistency, prefer a claim for the reduction of these rates, founded on the ground of their having, by an increase of trade, or other causes, become more than an equivalent for the considerations, in respect of which they were granted, unless they were prepared to concede the converse of the proposition, and to admit 'that if the case had been reversed, and the Dues had fallen short of the expenditure, they would have been equally ready to agree to their augmentation.' To this argument the Chamber have attempted a reply, but in a manner which marks at once their sense of its validity, and their inability to give the proof which it proposes as the test of the equity of their claim. They profess, in terms, to make the admission required, whilst with singular inconsistency they studiously avoid it in fact.

Their words are these—"The principle involved in the converse of this proposition this Committee will admit;" and then, instead of making the admission accordingly in the terms required by the argument, which, if sincere in their profession, they could have no difficulty in doing, they proceed, as if in proof of their assertion, to make protestations and adduce instances which in reality have no manner of relation to it. "If money," they say, "be wanted for a legitimate useful purpose, and is to be applied under due regulations, it ought to be raised;" and again, "to remove, however, all doubt from the minds of the Society, this Committee feels no difficulty in stating, that, in any in-

stance in which, for advancing the interest or increasing the accommodation of the Port, it may become necessary to raise, from the absence of a specific fund, moneys to defray the expenditure of the undertaking, the strenuous endeavours of the Chamber will be applied in promoting the object. The mercantile and trading interests of the City have zealously supported every means for improving the Port; the Plan for constructing the Floating Harbour was carried into execution wholly by the efforts of the Public; and a similar spirit will continue to prevail so long as the measures of Public Bodies are governed by principles of liberality and true policy;" all which have nothing to do with the question; so far from proving the truth of their assertion, " that they are willing to admit the converse," or, which is the same thing, " the principle involved in the converse," of the proposition referred to, proves, in the opinion of this Committee, the very reverse. And here this Committee cannot forbear remarking, that the instance of the improvement of the Harbour adduced by the Chamber is a very unfortunate illustration for their side of the argument. The moneys raised for effecting that improvement, it is well known, amounted in the whole to a sum of great magnitude; and it is equally notorious, that the rates granted in return proved to be a very inadequate compensation to the subscribers; being unequal, for many years, to pay any interest at all upon more than half the debt. The Chamber, too, admits that the subscribers were actuated by motives of public spirit. The question then is, will the Chamber of Commerce consent to such an increase of the Dock Rates as shall be equal to reimburse to the subscribers all their past losses, and to secure to them, in future, an interest of Five per Cent. on the sums raised? Upon their answer to this question the Society might safely rest the whole issue of the present controversy.

Before they conclude, the Committee think it right to advert once more to an observation of the Chamber which

has been repeated in their last Resolution. They still, it appears, insist upon the applicability of their quotation from a former Report of the Society as evidence of a contradiction between the opinions of the Society as then stated, and their present refusal to reduce the rates in question; and this they endeavour to prove by a definition of the term "equivalent" used in the passage quoted. To which this Committee replies, in the first place, that the term was evidently used not in an absolute but in a qualified sense; as appears as well by the immediate context, the term "remuneration" being employed as synonymous in the second branch of the passage quoted, as by the nature of the rates to which the observation was applied being rates for which, as the Society contended (whether correctly or not is unimportant to the present question), no return whatever was rendered to the Public, the cause wherein they originated having for ages ceased to exist: a ground of objection which constitutes something more than a "slight shade of difference" between the two cases. But granting that the term was meant to be used in the unqualified sense contended for by the Chamber, still it will be found that they are wrong in their conclusion. In estimating the value of the consideration given for the rates in question, the Chamber has omitted to take into account the risk of loss incurred in case, by a decrease in the trade of the Port, or any other cause, the rates had become unequal to the burthens undertaken in respect thereof; which, however, was an important feature in the estimate, and with just as much reason, as it appears to this Committee, might the purchaser of a life-annuity, who has happened to outlive the term, upon which, according to the tables of the probabilities of human life, the purchase money was calculated, be called on to forego all future payments, upon the ground of his not having given an equivalent for the annuity, as the Society be required upon similar ground to relinquish any part of the Dues in question.

And if this reasoning be true, as it undoubtedly is, with regard to the Society, the Lessees of the rates, it would not be difficult to show, if the argument required it, that the same principle would apply to their Lessors, the Corporation of Bristol. But enough has been stated to prove the unreasonableness of the Chamber's requisition, so far as the Society is concerned; and this Committee is not disposed to carry the discussion one step further than the occasion demands. Here, therefore, they will close this controversy on their part, recommending to the Society that they adhere to their original determination, and that the application of the Chamber be accordingly refused.

"And at a General Meeting of the Society, holden in their Common Hall, on the same day.

"The above Resolution was confirmed.

"By Order of the Society,

"JER. OSBORNE, Clerk."

"At a Meeting of the COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER ON LOCAL TAXATION, holden the 3d day of Nov. 1827, THOMAS STOCK, Esq. President, in the Chair.

"The Secretary submitted a communication from the Society of Merchant Venturers, under date of the 14th day of September, which the Society determine shall be their final reply, wherein, &c. (recapitulating the heads of the foregoing Document) which being considered, the following reply was agreed to :—

"The grounds on which the Chamber of Commerce has founded its appeal to the Society are—1stly, That the Tolls were granted to the Civic Corporation for the especial purpose of constructing and maintaining Quays and Wharfs

within the Port, which Tolls, whether collected by the Civic Corporation, or by the Society as claiming under them, are, in either case, to be considered a trust property for the public benefit, especially applicable to the purposes of its creation, and incapable of being diverted from the original object, or made the subject of private advantage.—2ndly, That as the present receipt of Tolls amounts annually to a sum far exceeding the expenditure, a reduction is fairly due to the trading community.—3rdly, That such reduction would be an act of policy beneficial to the trade of the Port, by relieving its local taxation.—4thly, That the continuing the Rates to the full amount, when no necessity for so large a produce exists, is inconsistent with the principles avowed by the Society in their Report of November, 1823.

"To these grounds of appeal, the Society have failed to give either a sufficient or satisfactory reply. The Society, while they appear to admit that a surplus exceeding the expenditure arises yearly in the Tolls collected, claim that, by reason of their grant from the Civic Corporation, they are not accountable for any surplus; and, omitting to notice the important fact that, since the Tolls were granted to the Civic Corporation for a specific object, it was not competent to that body to make any subgrant inconsistent with the nature of the property, they contend that they cannot fairly be required to entertain the appeal under any of the circumstances, or upon any of the principles, advanced by the Chamber.

"The refusal to be influenced by any general considerations for the public interests, with the qualification attempted to be given by the Society to the extract from their Report, serve to convince this Committee of the entire inutility of further pursuing the object in the expectation of the Society being induced to accede to the request either independently of, or by their influence with, the Civic Corporation. This Committee, regretting this conclusion, have the satisfaction of feeling that the appeal has been urged in the most perfect spirit of conciliation; that the reduction has been requested

of the Society on their own terms, and in a manner the best calculated for obtaining a successful issue.

"The question put by the Society in the nature of a proposal for remunerating the Dock Proprietors requires notice. It is asked whether the Chamber of Commerce will consent to an increase of the Dock Rates, to reimburse the Dock Proprietors the deficiency in receipt of Income of Five per Cent. on their Capital to the present time, and to secure them Five per Cent. in future. In answer it may be observed that the Dock Proprietors have never made such application, and that they have more discretion than to advance such a claim. The original Dock Proprietors undertook, with the sanction of Parliament, to execute certain improvements to the Harbour for a remuneration in fixed Tolls. The extent of the work was defined, the costs estimated, the terms of remuneration settled, and the bargain made upon an explicit basis of risk and profit. Positive advantages were secured to the public at a specific price, whilst the Parties embarking in the speculation were contented to abide all risk, their remuneration being limited to an interest of Eight per Cent. on their subscription. The whole was a bargain and speculation. The proposition, therefore, of reimbursing the Dock Proprietors for what may appear at present a loss, is highly unreasonable; whilst increasing the Rates would, most probably, by its injury to trade, diminish the present revenue, and add to their loss. The property, by the late increase of trade, is gradually recovering its value, and it is possible that the calculations of the original projectors may yet be realized, if the general interests of the City could be effectually promoted. In this object, the views of the Dock Company and the Chamber equally coincide; and, if the Society are really solicitous of producing benefit to the Dock Proprietors, they possess the power of doing so by other means than they now propose. Let the Society apply their influence and capabilities to measures for promoting the trade of the City, relieving it from local charges, par-

ticularly from the unnecessary amount of their own Tolls; and they will then not only improve the value of the Dock Company's Stock, but diffuse a general benefit over the whole Trading Community. The Society state that on the answer to their question they might safely rest the issue of the present controversy; this declaration implies that their claim to the acquiescence of the Public in their Tolls is equally strong with that of the Dock Proprietors. In bringing themselves into direct comparison with that body, it would have been desirable if the Society had entered more fully into the nature and terms of the original grant to the Civic Corporation, and had pointed out the extent of benefit which has been afforded to the trade of the City, by the moneys from time to time received from the Tolls. As respects the Dock Dues, many circumstances have been already enumerated as peculiar to that property: to these might be added the degree of improvement and remuneration to the Public; the specific application of the Tolls; the admission of the Public into the management; the publication of accounts; the establishment of a Sinking Fund; and the limitation of Interest to the Subscribers. These tend to reconcile the Commercial Interests to the charge of Dock Dues. The Wharfage Dues possess none of these essential qualities; no recent or prospective benefit is set forth in the Parliamentary confirmation of them; the Act, though passed subsequently to the first Dock Act, provided not for any publication of accounts; for any public controul or management; or for any limitation of receipt. There are none of the provisions which properly belong to a grant or confirmation of public Tolls; on the contrary it appears like a private Act, procured for placing beyond the reach of legal investigation the Tolls in question, and securing them permanently for the mutual advantage of the Civic Corporation and the Society. In point of character, the Wharfage Dues may rather be contrasted with, than compared to, the Dock Dues;

though granted for public purposes, they appear to have been viewed, and are certainly now treated, as private property, the large proportion of annual receipt being carried into the general Funds of the Society, or of the Civic Corporation, and the Tolls themselves on Exports being remitted Members of the Society, as an individual privilege and benefit.

"The Correspondence will now close; but should the subject admit of an altered view by the Society, this Committee will have pleasure in resuming it, or meeting the Society upon any footing which may be calculated to lead to an amicable and fair adjustment of the question.

(Signed) "THOMAS STOCK, Chairman."

Dr. *The BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE in Account.* *Cr.*

1827.		£	s.	d.
Jan. 26.	To Balance in Treasurers' hands, as per last Account	98	13	1
	To Two Arrears of Annual Subscriptions for 1826	2	2	0
	To One New Subscription	1	1	0
	To One Entrance	2	2	0
	To Amount of Annual Subscriptions, received from 170 Members for the current year (Eleven are in Arrear.)	178	10	0
		£282	8	1
Jan. 26, 1828.	To Balance brought down	81	3	8

Audited and Examined,
Bristol, January 26, 1828.
J. E. NASH.
ROBT. FLETCHER.
EDWD. SLADE.

1827.		£	s.	d.
	By William Browne, for Stationery	1	0	2
	By J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings	17	9	6
	By J. M. Gutch, for Statutes at large, 6 & 7 Geo. IV.	3	4	6
	By J. W. Turpin & Co, for binding ditto, and for binding Sessional Papers for 1827, 26 vols.	7	6	6
	By Printers' Accounts—viz. J. M. Gutch..... 7 17 7			
	Mirror Proprietors 6 9 0			
	John Mills 2 2 0			
	T. J. Manchee... 2 10 0			
		18	17	7
	By Petty Disbursements, as per Account exhibited	5	5	2
	By Rent of Committee-Rooms, to 21st December	26	5	0
	By Fire and Laundress ditto	6	6	0
	By Secretary, One Year's Salary, ditto	105	0	0
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Balance in Treasurers' hands	81	3	8
		£282	8	1

AT a Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held at the COMMERCIAL ROOMS, on Monday, the 28th of January, 1828,

THOMAS STOCK, Esq. PRESIDENT,
IN THE CHAIR;

A Report from the Board of Directors having been read,

It was unanimously Resolved,

1st. That the Report be adopted, and be printed and circulated under the direction of the Board.

2d. That the Thanks of this Meeting be presented to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors, for their unremitting attention to the affairs of the Chamber, during the past year.

3d. That the reduction of every species of taxation within the city is a subject of vital importance; and this Meeting relies on the Board persevering in their endeavours to confine within the narrowest limits all those local Rates and Charges which impede the advancement of the Port.

4th. That the President be requested to convey to the Members in Parliament for the city the thanks of this Meeting for their prompt attention to the several subjects in which their interference has been requested.

5th. That this Meeting adopt the recommendation for altering Rule II., by dispensing

with the payment of two guineas on admission of Members, and that the Rule stands altered accordingly.

6th. That the foregoing Resolutions be published in the Bristol Papers.

THOMAS STOCK, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

T. J. Manchee, Printer, Bristol.

Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT

OF A

COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

TO CONSIDER THE

Facilities which the City and Neighbourhood of Bristol afford for the introduction of new and the extension of the existing Branches

OF

MANUFACTURE,

Presented to and adopted by the Board, Oct. 6, 1828.

BRISTOL:

Printed at the Mirror Office, by John Taylor.

1828.

REPORT.

The Committee appointed by the Board to investigate and report upon the subject referred to it by the Chamber, at its Annual Meeting in January last, viz., "The capabilities of the City of Bristol and its Neighbourhood for the establishment of such branches of Manufacture as have not yet been introduced, and the improvement and extension of those already established there," present the following Report as the result of their inquiries:

In fulfilling this duty, your Committee have endeavoured to ascertain, in the first instance, the principal essentials for rendering a place or district peculiarly eligible as a seat for Manufactories; and next, whether the City and neighbourhood of Bristol possessed such essentials, according to the requisites of each leading branch of Manufacture brought under consideration. Having arrived at a satisfactory conclusion on these two points, your Committee next proceeded to consider the several branches of Manufacture which, with a fair prospect of success, might be introduced, selecting those which would be calculated more especially to advance the Interests of the City.

On the first subject of inquiry, your Committee find that, in affording the chief essentials for a Manufacturing District, Bristol and its neighbourhood will bear comparison with any of the more preferred parts of the Kingdom. In the cost of Coal, the expense of Labour, the supply and prices of Provisions, and other material points, a minute examination has been insti-

tuted. The facilities of procuring the Raw Material (if of foreign produce), the cost of Inland Carriage, the expense of bringing the Manufactured Articles into the Market or to the Port for Shipment, and the Freights from this and different other Ports in the Kingdom to and from Foreign Countries; these several material points have been carefully investigated and viewed in comparison as they affect the Profits of the Manufacturer, and your Committee feel that the facts elicited fully support their opinion of the advantages Bristol presents.

In the course of these inquiries, one general principle has been found to prevail in governing the choice of Stations for the establishment of Manufactories. It appears that a cheap and sufficient supply of Coal, and in some cases of water also, forms one great desideratum. In these respects, Bristol and its environs possess peculiar advantages in the various qualities of Coal adapted to the different branches of Manufacture, and the capability of unlimited supply at prices as low as this important article bears, with some exceptions, in any part of the Kingdom. Monmouthshire, with its numerous Collieries abounding with the facilities of inland transit, can render any supply and of any required quality. At Bedminster, one mile from the City, is raised a fine quality of Coal, and the works are capable of considerable extension. Saint George's, Kingswood, and Coalpitheath, are other districts in the vicinity, each producing excellent Coal in abundant quantities, and from whence a portion of the present supply is drawn; and these last-mentioned districts will in a short period become more closely connected with the City by a Railroad, already commenced, and which has been undertaken for the sole purpose of opening and bringing into full efficiency this valuable source of supply.

Since the introduction and general application of the Steam Engine, a large supply of water is not so indispensable for the generality of Manufactories; yet, for such as may need this requisite, the Banks of the Avon, as well as other districts in the surrounding Country, will be found well adapted. In every direction building materials abound, whilst the moderate

rate of wages, and the large population, present to the Manufacturer the means of procuring and maintaining any number of Artisans, with the advantage of keeping them independent of that system of combination which, in many places peculiar to certain branches of Manufacture, has been found to check the prosperity of extensive works.

In the supply and price of Provisions, Bristol stands peculiarly favoured, and this necessarily operates to control the rate of wages. Surrounded by rich Agricultural Districts; possessed, on the one hand, of extensive inland navigation, by the River Avon, Kennet and Avon, and Wilts and Berks, and Somersetshire Coal Canals, connecting the City with Wiltshire, Berkshire, and the Corn Districts; possessed, on the other hand, of the Severn, with the Berkeley and Gloucester Canal, affording expeditious means of communication with Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and the adjacent Counties—of the Wye, the Usk, and other Rivers of Monmouthshire and South Wales, on the one side of the Bristol Channel, with the Perrott, and other Rivers of Somersetshire and Devonshire, on the other side; to which may be likewise added, the South of Ireland, now brought, by the celerity of Steam Navigation, to the comparative position of a neighbouring County;—with these several channels of supply, such an abundance of every article is produced, that an uniform and moderate rate of price is maintained, highly conducive to the welfare of a manufacturing population.

With these advantages, it has excited surprise that, considering the vast sums embarked in the Manufacture of Cotton Goods and Twist, no one Capitalist should have been attracted to this City or neighbourhood, more especially since these articles are already in considerable demand, and are of all others most wanted for supporting the Trade of the Port, by supplying to Shipowners and Merchants the means of making up an assorted Cargo, the convenience of which would go far to secure encouragement to any Parties engaged in such an undertaking.

The want of light Goods, the Manufactures of the neighbourhood, has been long felt as a prominent dis-

advantage; and in degree of importance, your Committee are of opinion that Cotton Goods and Cotton Twist form the branches of Manufacture that should be *first* introduced, in order to advance the interests of the City in its Manufacturing and Commercial relations.

Your Committee form this conclusion on two grounds—first, they believe that the import of the Raw Material, and the export of the Manufactured Articles, would undoubtedly increase, both directly and indirectly, the Trade of the Port, and thereby diffuse very material benefits amongst all classes of the community —and secondly, that from the local advantages which Bristol commands as a place where the Manufactures might be produced, little risk would attend the forming an Establishment for the purpose.

In exposition of the first point, it will be sufficient to point out the instances of Liverpool and Glasgow, as illustrating the benefits flowing from the Cotton Trade in its several branches; the importance of each of these places may be traced in some degree to this source. The acquiring for Bristol a portion of this valuable Trade would not deprive any other places of their present traffic; the spirit and enterprise of the present day are sure to find a Market for the Goods produced, it being found that the demand very generally keeps pace with the increased produce. The unusual demand for Cotton Goods and Twist that has of late years arisen, and the wide field opened in India and China for these articles, furnish strong encouragement to the proposition.

The progressive increase in the Exports, to the East Indies and China in particular, is shewn from the following extract from the Parliamentary Papers of the last Session.

An Account of the Official Values of Cotton Manufactured Goods exported from Great Britain in each Year, from 1818 *to* 1826, *both inclusive.*

In the Years ..	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.	1822.	1823.	1824.	1825.	1826.
	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.	£ s.d.
Official Value, ..	21,292,355 3 1	16,696,539 8 11	20,509,926 0 7	21,642,935 19 11	24,559,272 1 1	24,119,358 15 9	27,171,555 18 3	26,597,574 16 11	21,445,742 13 4

An Account of so much of the same Goods as were exported in the same Years to the East Indies and China.

In the Years ..	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.	1822.	1823.	1824.	1825.	1826.
Official Value, ..	698,816 17 8	556,115 13 6	1,138,701 14 5	1,531,293 14 0	1,639,001 11 3	1,741,057 4 10	1,761,240 16 6	1,703,822 1 11	2,061,701 14 9

An Account of the Official Values of Cotton Twist and Yarn exported from Great Britain in each Year, from 1818 *to* 1826, *both inclusive.*

In the Years ..	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.	1822.	1823.	1824.	1825.	1826.
Official Value, ..	1,296,775 11 8	1,585,753 6 0	2,022,153 0 3	1,898,679 2 1	2,351,771 6 5	2,425,411 0 5	2,984,344 15 8	2,897,706 2 4	3,748,526 16 1

An Account of so much of the same Goods as were exported in the same Years to the East Indies and China.

In the Years ..	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.	1822.	1823.	1824.	1825.	1826.
Official Value, ..	166 3 0	86 13 11	20 0 0	523 13 2	1982 2 10	10,789 10 6	9,406 4 11	20,890 16 8	79,230 10 1

☞ As far as can be collected from the Custom-House Reports, the export of Cotton Twist to the East Indies has increased in an extraordinary degree, compared with that of 1826, but the Official Accounts are not yet declared.—The Custom Entries of Cotton Twist are as follow:—in 1824, 105,000lb.; in 1825, 235,000lb.; in 1826, 919,000lb.; in 1827, 2,672,000lb.; and in the first three months of 1828, 1,149,000lb.; or nearly one-sixth of the whole export of the United Kingdom.

The Trade between this Port and India has hitherto been limited from the want of a *local* demand for the produce of the Country, in several of the Articles usually forming a Cargo. Sugar, Rice, Cotton, and Saltpetre, are the principal component parts of every Cargo. The recent reduction of Duties on some of these will afford relief to the Trade; still, however, without a home demand for Cotton, which is one of the chief Articles of import from India, the Merchant and Shipowner sustain a disadvantage in making a shipment to Bristol. Again, Cotton Goods and Twist are required to form assorted outward Cargoes to fill up the vacant room occasioned by the description of Goods which might be exported from this place; thus, until these Articles can be added to the list of Products of the City and neighbourhood, there will be no encouraging demand for the Raw Material, and no advantageous supply of the Manufactures.

With reference to the second point, the qualifications of Bristol as a Manufacturing District, before enumerated, are sufficient to warrant the conclusion drawn. The Local Tolls lately modified on articles generally, and on those of high value in particular, will now bear comparison with Liverpool; the accommodation afforded by the Floating Harbour in bringing the Goods to the doors of the Warehouses, thereby reducing the expense of hauling, which forms an important consideration in several Ports, the moderate rate of charges by the Warehouse Keepers, the capability of establishing Manufactories, within or in the immediate neighbourhood of the City, under all the advantages of a cheap and efficient supply of Coal and other essentials for securing the operation of such works, the saving that would arise as compared with many Manufacturing Districts in the carriage of the Raw Material and Product from and back to the Shipping Port;* these several considerations concur to place Bristol in a favourable light upon every view of the subject.

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* The Carriage of Raw Cotton from Liverpool to Derby is 40s. per ton.
To Manchester, 15s. per ton.
———of Manufactured Goods to Liverpool from Derby, 50s. per ton.
From Manchester, 10s. per ton.

Independently of the demand of Cotton Goods for Export, the *local demand* for home consumption may be estimated as of considerable extent. The large population of the City, of Somersetshire, the West of England, Monmouthshire, Gloucestershire, and South Wales, for all of which Bristol ought to be the market whence all their supplies would be with most advantage drawn, would take off a large quantity of Cotton Goods, if sold on reasonable terms by being manufactured on the spot.

The same reasoning will apply to other branches of Manufacture of less national value, and which your Committee forbear to particularize; they will therefore proceed to the next subject of consideration, the extension or improvement of those branches of Manufacture already introduced in the City.

On this head, your Committee have been led to direct their attention to the article of China and Earthenware, as forming to the Merchant and Shipowner a principal and profitable Item of Export, when combined with our heavy Commodities, and as being an Article also of extensive home consumption. One Establishment only in this branch is now conducted in this City to any extent; its utmost power is unable to supply the present demand; the deficiency is consequently supplied from Staffordshire, at a great expense of carriage, with the additional charges of distant sale. In this the Merchant and Consumer labour under a disadvantage, and consequently in the foreign market the Shipments, from Ports lying in the more immediate vicinity of the seat of Manufacture, are capable of being disposed of at a cheaper rate, by reason of the lesser expense attached to them. On these grounds, therefore, the extension in Bristol of this branch of Manufacture would be desirable.

The success and character of the product of the Establishment alluded to prove the capability of the City in affording the essentials for profitably conducting it. Coal, of requisite strength and quickness, in which lies the peculiar advantage of the Staffordshire works, is supplied from Newport at a comparatively trifling difference in price and in inexhaustible quantities; the Coal of the immediate neighbourhood is found to

possess the qualities necessary for the general purposes of the Manufacture. In many respects, Bristol is by its situation more favoured than Staffordshire. The Clay and Stone from the South of England, a leading Article of Raw Material, can be delivered in Bristol at a lower rate than in Staffordshire. The Manufacturer there pays Canal Freight from Liverpool for the Raw Material, and another considerable tonnage for his Manufactured Goods back to Liverpool.*

These heavy charges on Articles of so inconsiderable value is much in favour of the Bristol Manufacturer, whose Works, lying at the Shipping Port, afford an important advantage.

In thus recommending the extension of Potteries in this neighbourhood, your Committee feel satisfied the measure would conduce to improve the Trade by the increased foreign demand that would arise so soon as this branch of Manufacture should become an article of more general local export. Competition excites fresh energies, gives an impulse to trade, and opens new channels for consumption, by which mutual benefits are derived and success is more extensively attained.

Amongst the numerous suggestions which have been presented to the attention of your Committee, the establishment of a Cloth Hall deserves notice. From the situation of Bristol, in the centre of the Woollen Manufacturing Districts of the West of England, the forming a general Mart for the Commodities would be a convenience as well to the Merchant as the Manufacturer; at present Shipments of Goods, the produce of this neighbourhood, are made at distant Ports, the inland carriage on which forms a considerable item of expense; the opening a Cloth Hall would be an encouragement to the Manufacturer, and would probably tend to restore the current of Trade in these Articles to its former channel, more especially since the Local Tolls no longer form an impediment to their export.

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* The Canal Freight from Liverpool to Staffordshire for the Raw Material is 10s. 8d. per ton, and for the Ware in Crates sent to Liverpool, 20s. per ton. It has been represented that 400 Crates of Ware are weekly sent to Liverpool by one Manufacturer only, for Shipment to America.

The practical effect of such Establishments has been proved by their operation in the Northern Counties, and an example is presented in our own City in the Leather Hall, by which Bristol has now become the mart for the West of England in that branch of Trade. The intended erection on a large scale of a Wool Hall, and the fixing monthly Meetings, will, in a similar manner, have a beneficial effect.

To the Articles of Carpeting, coarse Woollens, Silks, and the different kinds of Manufacture from Hemp and Flax, which form the products of the neighbouring Counties, your Committee have not extended their inquiries, considering, that from the immediate connexion Bristol holds with those Districts as being their natural Port for shipping and supply, they may be considered as identified with the City and contributing to its Trade; the Committee would however urge the expediency of improving every means of intercourse with the surrounding Country, by extending the inland communications and giving additional facilities, means of transit, and expedition. In this respect, considerable improvement has recently been effected. The opening the Berkeley Canal has given a safer, more expeditious, and certain means of communication with the Towns of Birmingham, Worcester, and all others in that line. The proposed Bristol and Gloucestershire Railway will, in another direction, powerfully conduce to the general welfare of the City, by bringing into extensive consumption the mineral property of the District through which it passes, and by connecting this valuable line of Country with the Floating Harbour raise its importance as a situation for Manufactories.

On those Articles which are considered our peculiar Manufactures, *viz.*,—Iron, Lead, Brass, Copper, Tin-plates, Crown Glass, Bottles, Stone-Ware, Refined Sugar, Hats, Tobacco Pipes, &c., it will be only necessary to observe that the progressive increase in these Trades, so far as may depend on foreign export, will be impeded or promoted by the continued absence or the accession of valuable light Goods.

Glass Bottles, Stone Ware, Hats, Tobacco Pipes, and such like Articles do not, from their inferior value, ad-

vantageously contribute to form a general Cargo, since the freight on them must necessarily be higher, if unaccompanied by a more eligible assortment, the value of which would bear its proportionate share of expense; to this is chiefly to be attributed the want of a steady and more extensive Trade in these our Manufactures. Speculation in such Articles, with the sole view of realizing a freight on them, is often disappointed by their unproductive sale at the Foreign Port, arising from the superfluous quantity of one article shipped in order to make up the Cargo, in place of the more general assortment; and this operates to check that uniform connection in Trade with Foreign Countries, under which alone Commerce can flourish.

In the foregoing observations, your Committee have confined themselves to the exposition of the general capabilities of the City and its neighbourhood, with the means by which such advantages may be brought to bear. The constitution of the Chamber will not admit of its Funds being applied in any undertaking of the nature suggested; the object of its Institution is to promote improvements by inquiry and recommendation, and to pave the way for their adoption by the interference and personal exertions of the Members, so that capital and the spirit of enterprize might be attracted into such channels as may most effectually conduce to the advancement of the general interests; and should the attention devoted to this subject add in any degree to the attainment of this end, it will afford to your Committee sincere and heartfelt satisfaction.

THOMAS STOCK, *President*,
CHAIRMAN.

At a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held on Monday, the 6th day of Oct., 1828, the foregoing Report was unanimously approved, and ordered to be printed, and circulated under the direction of the Committee.

LIONEL BIGG, *Secretary*.

Printed at the Bristol Mirror Office, by John Taylor.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Annual Report

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

TO

A GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

Held the 26th Day of January, 1829,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

The Resolutions,

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. M. GUTCH, 15, SMALL STREET,

1829.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

REPORT, &c.

On meeting the Chamber at this, its Sixth Anniversary, the Board of Directors, in accordance with the Rules of your Institution, present their Report of the several matters which have engaged their attention during the past year.

Taking the order in which the subjects occurred, your Board will first advert to the enquiry which, from the minute of proceedings first read, the Chamber directed should be made "into the capabilities of this city and its neighbourhood for the introduction of new branches of manufacture, and also into the means of extending those already established." This subject, from its comprehensive nature, the extent of information it became requisite to obtain, and the difficulty experienced in concluding safely on the comparisons arising in the course of the investigation, proved to be one of considerable labour and responsibility. After a series of meetings devoted exclusively to the enquiry so referred to them, your Board were, in the month of October last, enabled to make their Report which was forthwith published and distributed. This Document which treats the subject at great length will, it is hoped, meet the views of the parties at whose instance the inquiry was

instituted; it is founded on intelligence obtained from the most authentic sources, and calculations carefully made, and it brings under immediate notice the numerous advantages the city and neighbourhood possess as a manufacturing district. The distribution of this Report has been extended throughout parts of the North and West of England, and the Chamber will be gratified in learning that it has attracted attention in places where its effect is calculated to be beneficial.

Whilst pursuing this course of elaborate enquiry, your Board applied themselves with equal zeal to different other subjects, wherein the interference of the Chamber would be of advantage. The examination of the numerous bills brought into Parliament during the Session, the selection of those more peculiarly requiring consideration as affecting the city either generally or expressly, the investigation of them by different Committees, and the correspondence thereon with your Members in Parliament; these several duties, forming no unimportant portion of the uniform business attached to the office of Director, have been duly fulfilled.

To the Local Tolls of the Port, a subject of primary consideration with the Chamber, the attention of your Board has been unceasingly directed. The last Annual Report contained the particulars of a correspondence with the Society of Merchant Venturers on the expediency of reducing the Wharfage Rates, which however terminated in a refusal by that Body to entertain any such proposition. Protected by an Act of Parliament, and encouraged by an uninterrupted receipt for several years, the Society feel a security in the possession of these Tolls which no arguments founded on the prospective advantages of the port can influence. Remonstrance having been found unavailing, an investigation into the origin and

specific object of the Tolls has been undertaken with a view of ascertaining more positively the particular purposes for which they were created, and to which they ought exclusively to be applied. On this head much information has been obtained, on some points arising out of which it has been deemed advisable to submit a case to the opinion of Counsel, and though there may be difficulties in the way of further progess, yet the Chamber may be assured the object will not be relinquished whilst a reasonable prospect of success remains.

In the application to Parliament for a remission of the Stamp Duty on Receipts your Board took an active part, and in co-operation with similar Establishments in other Towns, used their utmost endeavours to attain the purpose. A Deputation appointed by your Body proceeded to London and procured an interview with Ministers, at which the arguments urged in favor of the repeal of the duty were listened to with attention and appeared to have considerable weight. To the respectable individuals composing the Deputation your Board feel themselves under peculiar obligation, as well for the strenuous exertions applied by them in prosecuting the object as for their liberality in relieving the Association from all expense attending the business. The state of the country, and the exigencies of government disappointed the hope of success which had been entertained. On a future occasion the application may, under more favorable circumstances, be renewed if the Chamber should deem it advisable.

From the Board of Commissioners of Revenue Enquiry several communications have been received requesting information on the intercourse by Steam Vessels between this Port and the South of Ireland. In order that the Board of Commissioners might be supplied with every particular connected with the

subject, a Committee was specially appointed, who examined minutely into the nature, extent, degree of expedition, regularity, and rate of charges of our Irish Steam-Packet Establishment. In the Report transmitted, the facilities which this Port is capable of affording as a Packet Station for the South of Ireland are brought under the notice of Government, and the subject being of interest a Copy of the Report is subjoined :—

> " Report of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce to the Commissioners of Revenue Enquiry.

" The Board of Directors have the pleasure to present the following Report to the Commissioners of Revenue Enquiry in reply to their communication of the 6th ultimo, intimating " that their attention having for some time past been called, " amongst other branches of the department of the Post Office, " to the arrangements under which the Mails are at present con- " veyed between England and Ireland, they should be glad to " receive any information or suggestions which the Chamber may " be desirous of offering, with a view to any alterations or im- " provements which may be deemed expedient, in the communi- " cation between the Port of Bristol and Ireland."

" The Board of Directors have diligently enquired into and attentively considered the subject on which the Commissioners have referred to them for information, and on a review of the present arrangements as respects the South of Ireland, as detailed in the two Reports of the Committee of the House of Commons on the Milford Haven communication, and from the result of the enquiries the Board have instituted, they respectfully suggest, that the conveyance of the Mails to the Southof Ireland may, with decided advantage to Government, and with increased

convenience to the public, be effected by Steam Vessels sailing daily *direct from Bristol.*

"The transmission of the Mails direct from Bristol was earnestly pressed upon the attention of the Post Master General in the year 1823, on which occasion the Chamber minutely investigated the practicability, safety, and general advantages of the measure, the material points of which were embodied in a memorial, accompanied by a list of queries and replies. The Civic Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Bristol Dock Company each presented similar Memorials.

"Copies of these Documents accompany this Report, and the Committee take leave to call the particular attention of the Commissioners to the Memorial of the Chamber with the subjoined evidence of Mr. Gilmore; the statement and views therein expressed having been for the most part confirmed by the experience of the intermediate time.

"In resuming the enquiry the Board have resorted to the channels best calculated to convey accurate information. The Managing Proprietors of the Steam Packet Establishments at this Port; Captain Dungey, an individual on whose experience and judgment reliance may be placed; and other persons of practical knowledge, have been consulted on the subject. All concur in establishing the fact that the voyage to and from Dunmore, may, with general certainty, be accomplished by efficient Steam Boats, in from 24 to 26 hours during the eight summer months, and in from 26 to 30 hours in the four months of winter; that the instances of exceeding this scale would not be more frequent than at the present station, the navigation of the Bristol Channel being protected by the coast on either side, and consequently less influenced by severe weather than the Irish Sea.

" The earlier arrival of the London Mail, and its later departure, as altered some time since, accords materially with the proposition for making Bristol a Packet Station. By the present regulations, the London Mail arrives in Bristol at 5 minutes past 9 o'clock in the morning, and leaves at half-past 5 in the evening; it is capable of being still further accelerated by taking the two last stages in the direct line through Marshfield instead of passing through Bath. According to the present arrangements the Irish Mails may with ease and convenience to passengers, be dispatched from the mouth of the Bristol River, five miles from the Post-Office, every day at half-past ten o'clock, and those from Ireland, if arriving by four o'clock, be forwarded to London the same evening. The time saved by this route, as compared with that of Milford, would be, during at least the summer months, equal to one whole day for the purposes of business, since the arrival at Dunmore would be in the morning in the stead of evening, and the departure at noon in the stead of an early hour of the morning, as at present.

" The present Slips at Lamplighters' Hall and Broad Pill now serve for landing passengers from the Packets on special occasions; with very trifling expence they may be made efficient for passengers, and not more objectionable than the present accommodation for crossing the Estuary of the Severn —carriages, horses, baggage, and heavy goods might, at an earlier hour, be put on board at the Bristol Docks, which the boat would leave at the height of tide, in order to be in waiting for the mails at the place appointed for receiving them. At Lamplighters' Hall an Hotel is established, which, with the contiguity to the city, would insure to the public a supply

of all the accommodation a Packet Station would require. These are the facilities which can at present be afforded; at no very distant period, the accommodation will, in all probability, be yet further increased,—1st. by the erection of a pier, with hotel and establishment at Portishead on the Somersetshire side of the Avon, which the Corporation of the city have for some time had under consideration, with a view to promote the conveniences of passengers by the Steam Vessels and thus encourage the intercourse between this City and the South of Ireland. In aid of the present enquiry they have directed a Survey and Report by Mr. Milne, the Engineer, on the practicability and probable cost of the proposed Pier. 2ndly., and arising also from this scheme, is a plan for erecting a Bridge across the Avon, by the application in part of a fund amounting to nearly £8000., held by the Society of Merchant Venturers in trust under the will of William Vick deceased for the especial purpose, with the formation of an improved line of road by Mr. Gordon, Mr. Miles, and other Landed Proprietors on that side of the river, for the short distance to Portishead. These several improvements the respective parties interested are disposed to effect, and which any impelling motive, such as the establishment of a regular Mail Packet Station, may induce them immediately to undertake. The accomplishment of these works would render Portishead a most eligible station. It is protected from weather, is a safe anchorage, would have ample depth of water at any state of the tide, the landing would be instant on arrival, and it would be supplied with every convenience and accommodation for passengers.

"The Board believe an important saving of expense to Government would result from establishing Bristol as a Mail Packet Station. The great deficiency on the Milford station in the

receipts, as compared with the expenditure,† arises from the very limited number of persons who avail themselves of that line of communication. The land journey of twenty hours, at a fare of three pounds ten shillings, followed by a twelve hours' voyage by open sea, at a further expense of one pound ten shillings, with the inconvenience frequently sustained in crossing the Estuary of the Severn, deters persons from taking the Milford route by choice. The general introduction of Steam Packets, the degree of perfection in sailing to which they have been brought, the regularity and safety with which the voyages are performed, the accommodation to passengers, and the moderate scale of fares, have contributed to effect, of late years, a material change in the general opinion on Steam-boat conveyance. The long voyage by sea is now generally preferred to a long journey by land and the shorter one by sea. The number and efficiency of the Bristol Boats, and the economy in the fares, induce a large proportion of travellers to take the direct course from Bristol. Indeed, to so great an extent has this preference operated, that the Contractors for conveying the Mail throughout the whole line from Bristol to Milford, are understood to have given notice of their intention to determine their engagement, on account of the gradual decrease in the number of passengers, and the consequent loss

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† Extract from Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the Milford Haven Communication, page 93.

Appendix No. 2.

"An Account of the Receipts and Expenditure on the Milford Station for the year 1826.

"Receipts... ..... £2,928 6 9

"Expenditure £19,115 16 3

"Accountant General's Office, General Post Office, 28th February, 1827."

"C. T. COURT, Deputy Accountant General

they incur. A similar statement appears in the Report of the Post-Master General on the Memorial of the Innkeepers on the Holyhead route.

" In favor of Bristol it may be fairly stated, that at a comparatively trifling expense, the Port may be made commodious for a Packet Station; that the present strength of the Establishment at Milford would serve, with some addition, for that of Bristol. That the difference in price of coal at Portishead would reduce the expense of sailing the Packets from that station. That Bristol affords every prospect of increase of receipt, whilst at Milford it must, for the reasons before stated, necessarily decrease. That the demands of a large Commercial City, with its populous adjoining and connected districts, will create a traffic for boats making quick and regular voyages, which Milford, from its position, never can acquire;—the conveyance of fish and provisions alone could be made to yield a revenue of consequence.—Numerous other sources of receipt would arise to the Establishment from the conveniency of its regularity and expedition; indeed, so much are the Board impressed with the belief, that the traffic would be extensive and productive, that they venture to anticipate it may, at no very distant period, relieve the Government from any further charge than a comparatively nominal sum for the transport of the Mails.

" The Board are induced also to put the proposition in a national point of view. They feel, that the more closely Ireland can be brought in direct and active communication with this country, the more rapid will be its course of improvement. The introduction of Steam Navigation has, at this port, given an energy and extension to the Irish trade that far exceeds any previous expectations; each succeeding month

brings a vast increase of import and a corresponding export to the material benefit of each kingdom, and the more complete the intercourse can be established the more important will the trade become.

" The port of Bristol, from its position, possesses numerous capabilities for a Mail Packet Station. Its contiguity and means of land and water communication with the capital, its being the principal Shipping Port for the Manufacturing Districts of the South-west part of the kingdom, its close connection and water communication with Birmingham, Worcester, and other large towns in the centre of the kingdom; the convenience of its Floating Harbour—the reduced scale of its local Tolls—all these circumstances combine to give Bristol a superiority over other places on the coast, whether the subject be viewed as regards the economy of the Post-Office department, or the accommodation of the public.

" To prevent loss of time in the communication between South Wales and Ireland in case an alteration should be made, the bags may be taken and delivered at a point of the coast on the passage, or they may be conveyed direct from Portishead. On the discussion in 1823, some objection was raised on this head, to obviate which, this suggestion is thrown out.

" The Board have considered it advisable to subjoin a list of the Steam Packets plying between this port and Ireland, with the particulars of their tonnage, power of engines, days of sailing, and average number of passengers. This shews the extent of intercourse now maintained, though it forms no precise ground for calculation as applied to the probable revenue of a Mail Packet Establishment. The present boats rely chiefly on cargo, their hours of sailing are regulated according to the state of the tide, by which also the duration

of their voyage is necessarily influenced, it being unavailing their arriving within the period their power could accomplish, unless the tide served to bring them up the river. They consequently do not present all the inducements a regular mail establishment could offer.

" The Board have placed the subject of the Commissioners' Enquiry in the several points of view which appear to them fairly to arise upon the investigation and consideration it has received ; and they shall feel sincere gratification, if on this or any future occasion, they should in the least degree prove of assistance to a department of Government ; or should otherwise by their exertions conduce to the advancement of the public interests.

" THOMAS STOCK,

" *Bristol, July* 7, 1828." " *President.*"

The Pier at Portishead, and likewise the Bridge across the Avon so referred to, are objects still under consideration ; on the former undertaking Mr. Milne has delivered a plan and estimate, which has been submitted by the Civic Corporation to his Majesty's Government—on the latter undertaking the same eminent Engineer has furnished a plan and estimate which, it is understood, the Society of Merchant Venturers approve, and on which they intend to proceed so soon as the requisite sanction of Parliament can be procured. In addition to these works, your Board learn that it is intended to erect a Pier at Clevedon—such increased accommodation will effectually remedy the present inconvenience arising from the operation of the tides, and must ultimately lead to the Port being made a Government Packet Station. Proposals have also been issued for erecting and establishing an Hotel on a scale com-

mensurate with the importance of the city. This scheme which, when accomplished, will add to the attractions of the city, will, it is hoped, be warmly supported by the Members of the Chamber.

The Bristol and Gloucestershire and the Gloucestershire and Avon Rail-roads, with the intended new Cattle Market, are improvements introduced in the past year, which the Board have had the satisfaction of supporting. The first-named undertaking, when brought into operation, will materially conduce to the welfare of the city.

The Chamber, at its first formation, declared as an uncontrovertible principle, that a remission of the Local Tolls would restore to the city that trade, which their exorbitant amount had driven from its natural channels. A review of the opposition encountered in bringing this principle into operation as detailed in the successive Reports which have been published, of the slow but gradual progress which your perseverance secured, and of the degree of success which has attended your efforts, will at once convince the mind of every impartial observer of the benefits which have flowed from the establishment and measures of your Association. Whilst the general trade under the recent reduction of Town Dues has partially recovered itself, the Irish trade under entire exemption has rapidly increased; of which the clearest proof is to be found on a comparison of the Exports and Imports to and from Ireland and this Port at the former and present periods.

The vacancies, occasioned by the death and secession of members during the past year, have been all supplied with a considerable addition, the new Subscribers since the 1st January 1828 amounting to 63 distinct firms and individuals.—This accession indicates strongly the prevailing opinion in favour of

the Chamber, it proves the interest taken by the public in your proceedings. The Institution invites the support of every respectable merchant, manufacturer, and trader in the city, and to this end the Board call your attention to the expediency of individual exertion still further to increase the list of Members and thus add efficiency to the establishment.

The Board take this opportunity of acknowledging the uniform attention Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright have paid to the several communications made to them on Parliamentary business.

The Account of Receipt and Expenditure is subjoined.

THOMAS STOCK,

CHAIRMAN.

Bristol, January 26, 1828.

Dr. THE BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ACCOUNT. *Cr.*

1828.		£.	s.	d.
Jan. 26.	To Balance in Treasurer's hands, as per last Account	81	3	8
Dec. 31.	To 4 Arrears of Annual Subscriptions for 1827	4	4	0
	To Amount received from 176 Members for the current year	184	16	0

Bristol, Jan. 23, 1829.

Audited and Examined,

JAS. EZEK. NASH.
ROBT. FLETCHER.
EDW. SLADE.

		£270	3	8
1829.				
Jan. 23.	To Balance brought down in Treasurer's hands	£48	7	6

1829.		£.	s.	d.
Jan. 22.	By Mr. J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings	18	3	6
	By Mr. Wm. Browne, for Stationary	2	0	1
	By Printers' Accounts, viz.			
	Mr. Taylor £11 5 0			
	Mr. Manchee 13 5 0			
	Mr. Gutch 10 9 1			
	Mr. Mills 1 15 6			
		36	14	7
	By petty Disbursements as per Account exhibited	4	5	0
	By Mr. Bigg, his payment for fees to Connsel on cases submitted for opinion, and Agent's charges in London attending the same	12	12	0
	By Rent of Committee-rooms to 21 Dec. last	26	5	0
	By Laundress, Fire, &c. to ditto	6	6	0
	By Secretary 1 Year's Salary to 31 Dec. last	105	0	0
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Balance carried down	48	7	6
		£270	3	8

At a Meeting of the Chamber, held at the Commercial Sale Rooms, January 26, 1829,

THOMAS STOCK, Esq. President, in the Chair;

A Report from the Board of Directors, referring to the proceedings of the past year, having been read,

It was Resolved unanimously,—1st.—That the Report now read be received, and be printed and distributed under the direction of the Board.

2nd.—That the Thanks of the Meeting be given to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors, for the efficient and satisfactory manner in which they have discharged their duties in the past year.

3rd.—That this Meeting acknowledges its obligation to Messrs. J. M. Gutch, Thomas Sanders, and George Thomas, for their kindness in proceeding as a Deputation to London on the application for a Repeal of the Receipt Stamp Duty, and for their exertions on the occasion.

4th.—That the exposition of the facilities this Port is capable of affording as an Irish Mail Packet Station detailed in the reply from the Board of Directors to the Commissioners of Revenue Enquiry, meets the unqualified approbation of this Meeting; whilst it presents the encouraging prospect of this City securing to itself, through the efforts of the Civic Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, the Dock Company, and this Association, the advantage of becoming at an early period, the direct Channel of Intercourse between the Metropolis and Ireland.

5th.—That this Meeting is gratified by the recent accession of so considerable a number of new Members, and by the opinion which generally prevails, that the establishment of the Chamber, and the independent course of its proceedings during a period of six years, has, in a great degree, contributed to the improvement which has arisen in the Trade of the Port, and by its influence has been productive of benefit to the Community at large.

6th.—That the injurious operation of the Wharfage Rates, more particularly as they affect the Irish, and American, and the Timber Trades, require the immediate attention of the Chamber; this Meeting relies, therefore, on a continuance of the exertions of the Board for ameliorating these Tolls.

7th.—That the Chairman convey the Thanks of this Meeting to Mr. R. H. Davis, and Mr. Bright, for their valuable assistance in the several subjects on which the Chamber had occasion to refer to them in the past year.

8th.—That such Directors retiring from the Board, who are Members of any existing Committee, be requested to continue their services until the subjects referred to them be disposed of.

9th.—That it be recommended to the Board to continue its exertions, whenever the opportunity shall present itself, to obtain the Repeal of the Receipt Stamp Duty.

10th.—That the Board be requested, at its earliest convenience, to consider the propriety of preparing and presenting Memorials to the Treasury, and to the Post-Master General, stating the advantages which would accrue to the Revenue, to the Port of Bristol, and to the Country generally, by making Bristol the direct Mail Packet Station between the Metropolis and Ireland.

11th.—That this Meeting being deeply impressed with the importance of extending the Trade of this Country with the British Possessions in India, and with China, recommend that subject to the early and serious consideration of the Board of Directors.

THOMAS STOCK, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein; whereupon the Meeting adjourned to Monday, the 2nd February, at the Committee Rooms, St. Stephen-street, at One o'clock, to receive the Report of the Scrutineers on the ballot for new Directors, elect a President and two Vice-Presidents, and complete the business of the Annual Meeting.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

REPORT

FROM THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE

CHAMBER,

At the Annual Meeting held January 25th, 1830,

AT THE

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. TAYLOR, MIRROR OFFICE.

BRISTOL

Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT

FROM THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE

CHAMBER,

At the Annual Meeting held January 25th, 1830,

AT THE

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY J. TAYLOR, MIRROR OFFICE.

REPORT, &c.

The Board of Directors, in meeting the Chamber on the commencement of another year, have the pleasure to present a Report of their Proceedings.

The more peculiar province of the Chamber being the promotion and protection of the Local Interests of the City, your Board have sedulously applied themselves to every object in which their interference could produce benefit. The proposition of establishing an Irish Mail Packet Station at this Port, in ascertaining the capabilities and advantages of which for the information of the Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry so much time was in the former year devoted, has been pursued with equal diligence in the past year, and notwithstanding the apparent difficulties to be overcome, it will appear to be in progress.—The series of communications now laid before you, as continued from the last Report, will shew the anxiety of the Board to procure from Government an assurance or opinion in favour of the proposed alteration, as a basis for inviting the Public Bodies of the City to unite in considering the means by which those essential works of improvement, the Bridge across the Avon and the Pier at Portishead, might be constructed. The reply of his Grace the Post

Master General was of a character as encouraging as the official communications of Government usually bear on subjects of prospective operation, and it was sufficient to warrant your Board in addressing the Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Dock Company, inviting their co-operation and assistance in forwarding the object. The only part of the general scheme which has received any direct impulse is the proposed Suspension Bridge. A Committee has been formed on the immediate appointment of the Society of Merchant Venturers, of which the President of your Body, *ex officio*, is nominated a Member, and from the progress already made, there is every probability of this branch of improvement being immediately submitted to the approval of the Public in a matured shape, and on terms to justify the requisite pecuniary support; a plan embracing every desirable quality has been designed and submitted by Mr. Telford, and it has been fully approved. The feasibility of the work is thus ascertained, while its eligibility and advantage to the City and Neighbourhood are now universally admitted.

The Corporation are proceeding in the erection of an Hotel at Portishead. The construction of some species of accommodation for landing Passengers from the Steam Vessels must necessarily follow; whether it will be upon a scale of efficiency to suit the views of Government cannot so easily be anticipated; but the increasing intercourse with the South of Ireland, fostered by these additional facilities, will secure to the Port, throughout the

greater part of the year, so large a proportion of the profitable business of a Packet Station, that Bristol will essentially become the preferable channel of intercourse, even without the accession of the Mail Packets.

The following are the several Documents referred to on this subject:—

"*To the Right Hon. his Majesty's Postmaster General.*

"The Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

"Your Memorialists beg respectfully to submit to your Lordship's attention a subject in favour of which they memorialised his Majesty's Post Master General in the year 1823, and which the experience of the intermediate time, the new circumstances that have arisen, and the additional proofs that can be now adduced, encourage them again to offer for consideration.

"Your Memorialists allude to the eligibility of the Port of Bristol as a Station for the conveyance direct by Steam Vessels of the Mails to and from Ireland, the important advantages of which in the means of increased dispatch and facility, as well as from the economy compared with the present establishment at Milford, are capable, your Memorialists believe, of being clearly established.

"Your Memorialists, having been recently favoured with a communication from the Board of Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry, on the intercourse between the Port of Bristol and Ireland, were induced to institute a minute inquiry into the present facilities of this Port as a Mail Packet Station, the improvement of which it is susceptible, the time within which the voyages might with regularity be made, the extent of establishment required for the purpose, with the comparative expense and probable receipt in aid of the expenditure; —all these points, with others having intimate connexion therewith, have been detailed in a reply transmitted to the Commissioners; and your Memorialists,

impressed with its importance, take the liberty of again submitting the subject to your Lordship's attention. They accordingly subjoin a Copy of such reply, with the evidence therein referred to, in the confident hope that, on a review and examination of the improvements and strong inducements the proposition presents, your Lordship will make such arrangements as may bring into early operation those sources of general benefit and advantage the alteration is calculated to produce.

(Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON,
"President."

"Bristol, February 2, 1829."

A similar Memorial was presented to the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury.

"General Post Office, 9th Feb., 1829.

"Sir,

"Having laid before my Lord, the Post Master General, your Letter of the 4th instant, transmitting a Memorial from the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, together with the accompanying Documents on the practicability of making the Port of Bristol a Station for his Majesty's Steam Packets to Ireland, I have it in command to acquaint you, for the information of the Chamber of Commerce, that, as his Grace is not aware that any thing has been done since the year 1823, the date of the former Memorial, to remove the difficulties which induced the then Post Master General to decide that the Port of Bristol did not afford the requisite facilities for a Station for his Majesty's Packets, it is not in his power to entertain the prayer of the Memorial.

"His Grace commands me to add, that as it appears from the Report of the Board of Directors to the Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry that, 'at no very distant period the accommodations will in all probability be yet further increased by the erection of a Pier, &c. &c., at Portishead, which the Corporation of the City have

for some time had under consideration, with a view to promote the convenience of Passengers by the Steam Vessels, and thus encourage the intercourse between the City and the South of Ireland,' he will not object to take into consideration the expediency of making Bristol a Station for his Majesty's Steam Packets, on being informed that the works for the improvement of the Port, which the Corporation have it in contemplation to erect, are in a state of progress, or even upon an assurance that they are to be immediately undertaken;—until this is done the question appears to his Grace to remain precisely in the same state in which it was in the year 1823.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) "FRANCIS FREELING,

"To Joseph Cookson, Esq., "Secretary."

"President of the Chamber of Commerce, Bristol."

A similar communication was received from the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury.

"Bristol, February 17, 1829.

"Sir,

"I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 9th instant, containing his Grace the Post Master General's observations upon the Memorial of the Chamber of Commerce, for making the Port of Bristol a Station for his Majesty's Steam Packets to Ireland.

"With reference to his Grace's remark,' that nothing appears to have been done since the year 1823, the date of the former Memorial, to remove the difficulties, which induced the then Post Master General to decide that the Port of Bristol did not afford the requisite facilities for a Station for his Majesty's Packets,' the Chamber takes leave to submit that the proposed improvements set forth in the Report are so far defined as to enable his Grace to judge of their effect when completed. The plan of the proposed Pier at Portishead has been taken by Mr. Milne, and

with the estimate of the work, is now before the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury. The Hotel at Portishead the Civic Corporation have proposed to erect at their own expense. The Road from Portishead to Leigh Down is in part completed, and the rest in operation. Mr. Milne has furnished a plan and estimate of the proposed Bridge across the Avon, with a map also of the Road from Portishead. These advances will place the proposition in a matured shape for the consideration of his Majesty's Government. The execution of these works in their full degree of efficiency, particularly as respects the Pier at Portishead, will necessarily depend on the view his Majesty's Government may take on the subject, and the prospect his Grace may afford of a Mail Packet Station being established; until these two points are ascertained, no material progress is likely to be made, since much inferior accommodation will be sufficient for all other purposes.

"Independently of these facilities capable of being afforded, the Chamber urges the subject on the ground of general advantage to the revenue, as compared with the present Establishment at Milford. The serious loss arising annually to his Grace's department from the deficiency of receipt at that station, the necessity of the extensive improvements recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons, might, it was supposed, induce his Grace to entertain the proposition in favour of Bristol, and to this end the increase of the trade and intercourse with Ireland which the Port has acquired since 1823, the present extent of its Steam Packet Establishment, and the other circumstances enumerated in the Report, were detailed, in order that from this information, with plans and estimates of the requisite improvements, his Grace might form an accurate judgment upon the expediency of making the alteration, either immediately or at some future period when the works, undertaken with a view to the object, might be effected.

"I take the liberty of remarking, that the decision upon the Memorial of 1823 rested upon the opinion formed by the Lords of the Treasury, of Milford being the more eligible station, without reference directly to

any want of the requisite facilities at Bristol. The new circumstances therefore, namely—the annual loss on the Milford Station, and the necessity of extensive improvements there—the increased communication between Bristol and Ireland—the experience of the last six years proving the regularity, increased celerity, and certainty that a Bristol Station would insure, with the prospect of improved receipt which Bristol is enabled to offer,—these new circumstances, combined with the capabilities now ascertained by the plans and estimates, give to the proposition a stronger claim upon his Grace's consideration than on the former occasion, and may possibly create for Bristol a preference on a comparative view now taken of the advantages and disadvantages each Station presents. These considerations induce the Chamber to again urge the subject on his Grace's favourable consideration.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) "JOSEPH COOKSON.
"President."

"To Sir F. Freeling, Bart."

"General Post Office, 2d March, 1829.

"Sir,

"I have received and laid before my Lord the Post Master General your further letter of the 17th ultimo.

"After duly weighing the arguments contained in that Letter, his Grace does not conceive that they afford him any grounds of justification for altering the view he has taken of the question. The circumstances to which you have adverted are not new, as supposed by the Chamber of Commerce, inasmuch as the Post Master General, from the first establishment of the Milford Station, was aware it could not be productive to the Revenue, and the improvements in contemplation at Milford, although for the personal accommodation of the Public, have not been sought for by this department, nor are they necessary so far as regards the mere transmission of the Mails. His Grace further desires me to explain, that the Chamber of Commerce have been misinformed as to the grounds upon which

the decision on the Memorial of 1823 rested, as far as the Post Office is concerned, which were, that the impossibility of dispatching the Mails at a fixed hour every day in the year presented insurmountable objections to the choice of Bristol as a Station for his Majesty's Packets.

"With regard to that passage in your Letter, in which it is stated, 'that the execution of the proposed works at Bristol in their full degree of efficiency, particularly as regards the Pier at Portishead, will necessarily depend on the view his Majesty's Government may take on the subject, and the prospect his Grace may afford of a Mail Packet Station being established, and that until these two points are ascertained, no material progress is likely to be made,' his Grace commands me to state, that he is not aware of any intention on the part of his Majesty's Government to undertake any public works at Bristol, and that it is not possible he can offer any pledge as to the establishment of Steam Packets at that Port; the simple point for the consideration of the Post Master General is, whether Bristol affords such facilities as to justify him in entertaining the question of making the Port an Irish Packet Station, and from your Letter, his Grace is confirmed in the opinion expressed in my former communication, that in this respect the case appears to rest in the same position in which it was in the year 1823.

"As the Chamber of Commerce have referred particularly to the plans drawn by Mr. Milne, his Grace desires me to state, for fear of any misapprehension, that it was by no means his intention to require a pledge that those specific plans should be carried into execution. The first requisite for a Packet Station is, that the Port should afford the means of embarking and landing the Mails at all times of tide, and under all circumstances of weather, and I am to repeat, that upon receiving an assurance that such indispensable facility shall be afforded (whether by a Pier, according to the Plan which has been exhibited, or in any other manner can be object of no consequence to this department, so that the accommodation be afforded), his Grace will

then be ready to consider the question how far it may be expedient to make the Port of Bristol a Station for his Majesty's Steam Packets to Ireland.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) "F. FREELING, Secretary."

"To Joseph Cookson, Esq., Bristol."

At a Meeting of the Committee (appointed by the Board of Directors, for conducting the inquiries and reporting to his Majesty's Government the means of improving the Communications between the Port of Bristol and the South of Ireland), held on Monday, the 27th July, 1829,

JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq., President,
In the Chair;

Read Resolution of the Board of Directors, under date of the 6th instant, viz.:—

"That Copies of the correspondence of the Chamber with the Lords of the Treasury, Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry, and the Post Master General, on the capabilities of the Port of Bristol as a Station for Mail Steam Packets to the South of Ireland, be transmitted to the Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Dock Company, requesting their co-operation in promoting the formation of such an Establishment, and suggesting the propriety of each Body deputing two of their Members to compose a Committee for inquiring into and considering the practicability of accomplishing the two essential works of improvement, viz., a Bridge across the Avon, and a Pier at the Mouth of the River, with power for such Committee to communicate with his Majesty's Government, if necessary, and also with the principal Land Owners interested, and to adopt all other means of ascertaining the expediency and the probable expense of executing both or either of the works—reporting the result of the proceedings to each of the Bodies from which they may be delegated.

"That if the Committee be formed, the President, Joseph Cookson, Esq., with Thomas Stock, Esq., be the Deputies from this Board."

Whereupon the following minute was agreed to:—

This Committee, in compliance with the foregoing instructions, transmit to the Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, and the Dock Company, Copies of the correspondence referred to, and respectfully invite a co-operation in effecting some plan of proceedings, whereby the expediency and practicability of the proposed improvements may be ascertained, and, if advisable, the arrangments made for accomplishing them.

The Committee deem it unnecessary to enumerate the many advantages the City would derive from the Establishment of a regular Mail Packet Station for the South of Ireland by Steam Vessels at this Port; the additional facilities of intercourse it would give must obviously lead to an increase of connexion with that valuable part of the Kingdom, and to a consequent extension of trade. The Committee moreover believe his Majesty's Government will not only be disposed, but must of necessity, from the decreasing receipt and increasing expenditure on the Milford Station, be induced to fix such an Establishment at this Port so soon as the requisite accommodation is afforded; the assurance given by the Post Master General in his last communication, and the report of the receipts and payments on the Milford Station, an extract of which is referred to in the Memorial of the Chamber, favour this conclusion.

In the arrangements for executing the two works so soon as they may be reported practicable and desirable, the Committee do not anticipate that any serious difficulty will be experienced. The Fund already in the possession of the Society of Merchant Venturers, applicable to the erection of the Bridge, will come in aid of the expenditure necessary for that branch of the works, and the additional value that will be given to the contiguous property on the Somersetshire side of

the River especially, ought to insure the ready acquiescence and support of all the Land Owners and others who will benefit by the improved communication. The want of the Pier at the Mouth of the River, for embarking and landing at all states of the Tide is seriously felt, and it operates to the disadvantage of the Port as a principal Channel of intercourse with the South of Ireland; if such an accommodation were supplied, it would without doubt be generally resorted to.

For these reasons, it may be fairly calculated that the two works, either together or separately, could be made to yield an income sufficient to pay an adequate interest for all the monies required to be raised, and at the same time afford to the Public, at a reasonable rate, the desired accommodation, and thus secure to the City an extensive and permanent benefit; whilst, as a public undertaking, the works would add materially to the character and credit of the City and Neighbourhood.

The Board of Directors are anxious to unite the interference and influence of all the Public Bodies of the City, as a proper means of promoting the object in view, and they have suggested the proposed plan in the hope of being met by a corresponding feeling, or at least of its giving rise to some measure by which the purpose will be equally attained.

(Signed) JOSEPH COOKSON, President.

At a Meeting of a Committee of the Bristol Dock Directors, holden at their Office, in Broad-Street, on Monday, the 17th day of August, 1829,

The communication from the Chamber of Commerce, which was referred to this Committee at the last Board, being taken into consideration, together with their accompanying Resolution, suggesting the propriety of the appointment of a Committee to be

composed of two Members from each of the following Bodies, namely, the Corporation, the Society of Merchants, the Dock Company, and the Chamber of Commerce, for the object therein stated; and it appearing, from the correspondence of the Chamber of Commerce with the Lords of the Treasury, Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry, and the Post Master General, that the taking into consideration the expediency of making Bristol a Station for his Majesty's Steam Packets with the South of Ireland is wholly dependent on the accomplishment of expensive improvements within the Port, towards which the Dock Company, from the nature of its constitution, has no means of contributing, the Committee is of opinion that the junction of the Dock Company, in forming part of the proposed Committee, would not be of any benefit in forwarding the object, which they consider, therefore, should be declined, more especially as this Board has already done every thing in its power for that purpose, by memorializing the Post Master General and the Lords of the Treasury.

At a Board of Directors of the Bristol Dock Company, holden at their Office, in Broad-Street, on Monday, the 24th day of August, 1829,

The Board took into consideration the proceedings of the Special Committee, to whom the communication of the Chamber of Commerce, relative to the making Bristol a Mail Steam Packet Station, was referred, and having again referred to the documents transmitted by the Chamber, they concur in the opinion stated by their Sub-Committee as to the inutility of any Deputation being appointed from this Board to form part of the proposed joint Committee; and it is ordered that a Copy of this Resolution and of the Resolution of the Sub-Committee be forwarded to the Chamber of Commerce, with the Thanks of this Board for the favour of the communication.

By Order of the Board,

JERE. OSBORNE, Clerk.

At a Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchants, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday, the 28th day of August, 1829, specially convened agreeably to the Order of the last Meeting,

JAMES JOSEPH WHITCHURCH, Esq., Master, in the Chair,

The communication from the Chamber of Commerce, submitted at the last Meeting, together with the accompanying Documents, setting forth the several applications made by the Chamber to the Lords of the Treasury, the Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry, and the Post Master General, for the establishing of Bristol as a Steam Packet Station to the South of Ireland, was taken into consideration.

The Committee also referred to the proceedings of the Society of Merchants, in the year 1823, when they memorialized the Treasury and the Post Master General on the same subject; and also to their renewed Memorial presented to the Lords of the Treasury in the present year, and to their Lordships' answer. From the result of all which applications, it appears clear that Government not only decline giving any pledge for the establishment of Mail Steam Packets at this Port, but refuse even to take the expediency of the measure into consideration until such improvements in the Port shall have been effected, or at least an assurance for their accomplishment given, as shall insure the practicability of embarking and landing the Mails at a fixed hour every day in the year.

The establishment of such facilities would, it appears, require the construction of a Pier at Portishead, or at some other spot in the Bristol Channel below the Mouth of the Avon; a work which would be attended with a very heavy expense, and which it does not appear to this Committee would be capable of being made productive of such returns as to afford any prospect of raising the amount by Subscriptions. If, however, the other Public Bodies referred to in the Resolution of the Chamber of Commerce should concur in the

expediency of appointing a Joint Committee, to consider of the means of effecting such an improvement, this Committee would recommend the Society to form part of such Committee, and to nominate two of their Members as a deputation for the purpose.

With regard to the other work, referred to in the correspondence of the Chamber of Commerce, the erection of a Bridge over the Avon, towards which the Society of Merchants are possessed of a fund under the will of William Vick, deceased, it has no necessary connexion with the proposed Pier at Portishead, although there can be no doubt, that, by the accomplishment of the two objects, their utility and advantages would be mutually increased. The fund accumulating in the hands of the Society for the construction of the Bridge will not reach the sum of £10,000, the amount by the will of the donor prescribed for its application until the year 1834. But as it is manifest that that sum, whatever might have been the case at the time of the donation, would be now very inadequate for the accomplishment of the proposed object, and that further subscriptions to a considerable amount to be secured by Tolls on the Bridge would be requisite, which could not be effectually accomplished without the aid of an Act of Parliament, this Committee is of opinion that it is extremely desirable that measures should be taken for carrying that object into execution as early as circumstances will admit. For which purpose, they recommend that an estimate of the expense of constructing the Bridge, on the plan furnished by Mr. Milne, or any other which may be deemed more eligible, should be procured. That a scheme and proposals for raising the necessary subscriptions and carrying the design into effect should be then submitted to the Public ; and that notices should be given and all other acts done, required by the standing orders of the Houses of Parliament, in order to enable the Society to proceed with a Bill in the next Session, if the preliminary measures should be then sufficiently matured for the purpose.

It is also recommended that a Copy of these Resolutions be forwarded to the Corporation of Bristol, the

Dock Company, and the Chamber of Commerce. That the Thanks of the Society be at the same time given to the Chamber for the favour of their communications on this subject, and that the benefit of their assistance and co-operation in raising the necessary subscriptions be requested when the Proposals are submitted to the Public.

At a Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Society of Merchants, holden in their Common Hall, on Friday, the 11th of September, 1829,

JAMES JOSEPH WHITCHURCH, Esq., Master, In the Chair,

The plans relating to the proposed Iron Bridge across the Avon were again submitted to the consideration of the Committee, with Mr. Milne's rough estimate of the expense; and the Committee being of opinion that the money required for the erection of such Bridge, beyond the amount payable under Mr. Vick's will for the erection of a Stone Bridge, might be raised by subscription,—it was Resolved that a Committee be appointed for the purpose of obtaining an Act of Parliament for the erection of an Iron Suspension Bridge over the Avon according to such plan, and in such manner as, under a consideration of all the circumstances of the case, they may judge most expedient.

That the Committee do consist of the following Gentlemen, viz.:—The Master of the Merchants' Hall for the time being, Mr. Richard Bright, Mr. Thos. Daniel, Mr. William Weare, Mr. George Gibbs, Mr. Abraham Hilhouse, Mr. Philip Protheroe, Mr. James George, Mr. Robert Bruce, jun., Mr. Peter Maze, Mr. Hugh William Danson, Mr. Henry George Fowler, and Mr. William Claxton; and that the Mayor, the Governor of Saint Peter's Hospital, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce for the time being, be requested to form part of such Committee.

That the Committee be invested with full powers to solicit and receive Subscriptions; to procure Surveys,

Plans, and Estimates; to employ Treasurers, Engineers, Clerks, and other Officers; to give Parliamentary and other Notices, and generally to do all other acts necessary or expedient for carrying the object of these Resolutions into effect, with powers also to add to their own numbers, and any three to constitute a quorum.

Resolved also that the constituting of Commissioners for effecting the object proposed by means of Subscriptions, bearing interest on the security of the Tolls, and by Donations, would, in the opinion of this Meeting, be preferable to the formation of a Joint Stock Company, and certainly most in conformity with the nature of Mr. Vick's bequest.

"Council House, Bristol, Dec. 15, 1829.

"Sir,

"We are directed by the Mayor to acquaint you that, at a Meeting of the Corporation, held on the 12th September last, the proceedings of the Chamber of Commerce, and Copies of Correspondence, between that Body and the Lords of the Treasury and others, relative to the adoption of measures for improving the communication between the South of Ireland and the Port of Bristol, transmitted by Mr. Bigg to us on the 30th of July last, were laid before the Corporation, who referred the consideration of the subject to the Surveyors of City Lands. That at the Meeting the Corporation held on the 9th instant, the Surveyors of City Lands, reported 'that judging as well from the tenor of their own correspondence with the Government as from the perusal of that which passed between the Chamber of Commerce and the Lords of the Treasury and others, that the Government would not pledge itself in any manner (even if a Pier were erected at Portishead, the estimated cost of which exceeds 20,000*l.*) to make Bristol the Station for conveying the Mails to the South of Ireland,' the Surveyors were of opinion that any further interference on the part of the Corporation (under the existing circumstances of the case) would not be attended with any beneficial results. And the Corporation, having ratified the report of the Sur-

veyors, it was ordered that we should communicate the result to the Chamber of Commerce, which we have now the honour to do through you.

"We are respectfully, Sir,

"Your most obedient Servants,

(Signed) "BRICE and BURGES."

"To the President of the Chamber of Commerce."

Amongst other matters of interest your Board have been engaged in inquiries into the operation of the American Tariff upon the manufacturing and trading interests of this country, and into the means of obviating many of the injuries resulting from it, by giving increased encouragement to the trade and internal communications of our North American Settlements, deriving through their medium a portion of the resources and scope of market from which the United States have attempted to exclude us. Considerable information has been collected on this subject.

The important question of prevailing upon Government to remove the restrictions on the East India Trade, and open that vast country to the enterprise of the British public, your Board brought under consideration at your last meeting. The subject being of national concern, in which the whole Kingdom would take a lively interest, it was deemed preferable to leave it in the hands of the Citizens at large, so that the City, in a discussion of such vital importance, might assume its proper position; and, acting in unison with other Commercial Districts, might secure an equitable settlement of the future regulations for governing so valu-

able a part of the British Possessions. A Public Meeting was held under the auspices of our late worthy Chief Magistrate, and a numerous Committee of the most respectable Inhabitants appointed. Two of the leading Members of your Institution were deputed to meet in London a Central Committee of Deputies from other Cities and Towns, and in their published Report will be seen the result of their Mission. Though this subject is no longer under the direction of your Board, it is viewed with anxiety, and a large proportion of your Body are engaged in its prosecution.

Your Board have corresponded with several similar Institutions in other parts of the Kingdom on points of information required, and they have in this branch of duty discharged, to the best of their ability, all the functions of their office.

The Kennet and Avon Canal Company have been induced to make arrangements, whereby the transit of Goods to and from London and Bristol will be materially expedited, the period being reduced, under ordinary circumstances, from seven days to four.

A regular intercourse with Liverpool is now maintained by Sailing Vessels, dispatched weekly. A similar arrangement for improving the intercourse with Exeter, Poole, and other Ports in the English Channel, would be highly advantageous.

In the examination of the Bills passing through Parliament very little time has been occupied, the public business of the last Session having been, for the most part, engrossed in an important political measure, in which it

was not the province of the Chamber to interfere. The next Session will, no doubt, bring two-fold duty, and it will be the endeavour of your Board to examine the new measures introduced, and to calculate their effect on the operations of trade, as the proper test of the theory on which they may be founded. The alteration in the Bankrupt Laws, effected some years since, by which the expense of Commissioners' Meetings in the Country is nearly doubled, proves the necessity of an examination into the practical results of new measures in their more minute details of operation, to prevent disadvantages being engrafted countervailing the advantages afforded.

As respects our local interests, it is with pleasure the Board are enabled to show a state of progressive improvement. The following account of the produce to the Dock Company from their Tolls on Vessels and on Goods is the best criterion on that head ;—these accounts do not include the Exports, or the Imports on Corn and Provisions, all which are exempt from Toll ; but in the absence of the regular detailed accounts supplied by the Custom-House Department to Government, which your Board have, without success, endeavoured to procure, they will serve as fair grounds for judgment :—

Extracts from the Published Accounts of the Bristol Dock Company :—

Year ending 30th April, 1821..	Tonnage Rates	£10,469 19 6	
	Rates on Goods	7237 7 6	
			£17,707 7 0
30th April, 1822..	Tonnage Rates	£10,530 11 2	
	Rates on Goods	8062 5 3	
			£18,592 16 5
30th April, 1823..	Tonnage Rates	£10,747 19 2	
	Rates on Goods	7746 7 7	
			£18,494 6 9

30th April, 1824..	Tonnage Rates	£12,395	6	4
	Rates on Goods	7990	7	2
				£20,385 13 6
30th April, 1825..	Tonnage Rates	£13,424	4	10
	Rates on Goods	9409	11	0
				£22,833 15 10
30th April, 1826..	Tonnage Rates	£14,863	10	0
	Rates on Goods	9438	14	3
				£24,302 4 3
30th April, 1827..	Tonnage Rates	£13,934	1	8
	Rates on Goods	7773	12	0
				£21,707 13 8
30th April, 1828..	Tonnage Rates	£15,292	0	2
	Rates on Goods	8397	16	2
				£23,689 16 4
30th April, 1829..	Tonnage Rates	£15,833	4	6
	Rates on Goods	8871	13	0
				£24,704 17 6

Nor have the general improvements throughout the City been advancing in a less degree. The Suspension Bridge is before referred to; the Bristol and Gloucestershire Railway will be completed in its upper line by Midsummer; the Avon and Gloucestershire Railway is in an advanced state. The Cattle Market will be opened on the 4th of February. The proposition for erecting a commodious Hotel worthy of the City is under consideration, and a Committee has been appointed to select and report upon the value of particular sites; and there are sanguine expectations that the Meetings of the Bath and West of England Society for the encouragement of Agriculture, Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, will be held at Bristol and Bath alternately, since the requisite degree of accommodation for the purpose will, by reason of the different improvements, be now within our power: the construction also of a Railway between this City and Bath is proposed, and the notices given for an application to Parliament.

Whatever decline in prosperity may have been experienced by the trading community has arisen from external causes, and principally from the distressed state of the Manufacturing Districts aggravated by the frauds practised by insolvent shopkeepers, under cover of the provisions of the Insolvent Debtors' Act. An investigation into the evils attendant on the operation and practical result of this well-intentioned, but imperfectly acting, system of legislation, which may be also extended to the country practice in Bankruptcy, is recommended to the serious attention of the Chamber; and if, until some effectual alteration can be acquired, an Association were formed, by subscription, to supply funds for the prosecution of fraudulent Debtors or Bankrupts, to be applied under the direction of a Committee, by vote to subscribing Members, in aid of the assets of the estates where they may be deficient, on the same principle as the Association for the prosecution of felons, it would tend to check the many instances of gross fraud practised throughout the country, which are as injurious by their example and the impunity with which they are suffered, as they are detrimental to the individuals who sustain the immediate loss. As the law now stands imprisonment for twenty-one days, when the proper opportunity is taken, cancels all obligation of debt, however great, and throws the delinquent again on the public, relieved from his engagements, and unconcerned in the ruin he may have occasioned. The reluctance of Creditors to incur expenses in addition to the loss of their debts, is one cause of so many proper objects of prosecution escaping punish-

ment; the frequency of such cases calls for the adoption of some effectual means to check the extension of the evil.

Another serious disadvantage is felt, in this City in particular as connected extensively with South Wales, from the new Clause introduced in the Act of 5th George IV., c. 106, s. 21, commonly called the Welsh Judicature Act; whereby it is provided, that in all actions for the recovery of debts, where the cause of Action arises and the Defendant resides in the Principality, parties suing in the superior Courts of Westminster, shall be subject to nonsuit, be liable to pay the Defendant's costs, and be precluded from bringing any other action, unless the verdict obtained amounts to £50. This provision renders it in numerous cases necessary to resort to the Courts of the Principality for enforcing payment of just demands; and from the uncertainty, risk, and difficulty incurred, arising chiefly from the inefficient practice and constitution of those Courts, the trader is frequently induced to abandon his debt as the lesser evil. To the Debtor it operates likewise as an inducement too frequently to resist the payment, in the expectation of the Creditor being deterred from proceeding. When it is considered how many Welsh accounts on the books of respectable Tradesmen in this City and Neighbourhood average as a standing debit less than £50, and that, in the opinion of many eminent Counsel, goods *ordered* in the Principality though *delivered* elsewhere, and Bills of Exchange or Promissory Notes *drawn within* though made payable and dishonoured *out* of the Principality, are still causes of Action arising *within* the Principality and come within

the meaning of this clause, it will be conceived how extensively this change affects our commercial population. On these several points it is not intended to impugn the Law of the Land in its *general principles;* it is the machinery only of its administration as it is experienced in practice and its operation on local interests, that is proposed to be brought under consideration.

The Board have pleasure in acknowledging the attentions received from our Members in Parliament in the past year.

The account of receipt and expenditure is subjoined. It will be a gratification to the Chamber to observe the considerable accession of Members since the last Meeting. The annual income and resources of the Institution are thus increased, whilst it affords the best proof of your exertions being appreciated by the Citizens at large. Your Board believe that the prejudice, which was partially imbibed at the first formation of the Chamber, has given place to a better feeling, and that the steady persevering line of conduct pursued has produced a general conviction of the utility of the Establishment, and of the benefits it is capable of affording to the City when its powers are judiciously applied. The Board hope their exertions will merit and receive a continuance of your approval and support.

JOSEPH COOKSON,
President.

Bristol, Jan. 20, 1830.

THE TREASURER OF THE CHAMBER IN ACCOUNT

Dr.

1859.	RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan. 26.	To Balance in Treasurer's hands as per last Account	3	7	6
	To Subscriptions received during the year	12	10	0
Dec. 31.	To Amount of Annual Subscription of Messrs. [illegible]	21	13	6
	To Ditto ditto of [illegible]	2	2	0
	To Amount received from [illegible]	1	1	0
	To Amount received for [illegible]	1	1	0
	To Amount received for [illegible]	1	1	0
	To Amount received for

Dr. THE BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ACCOUNT. *Cr.*

1829.	RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan. 26.	To Balance in Treasurer's hands, as per last Account	48	7	6
Dec. 31.	To one arrear of Annual Subscription of 1827	1	1	0
	To five ditto of 1828	5	5	0
	To Amount received from 234 Members for the year ending 31st Dec., 1829	245	14	0
		£300	7	6
1830.				
Jan. 23.	To Balance brought down in Treasurer's hands,	80	8	10

Bristol, Jan. 22, 1830.

Audited and Examined,

JAMES E. NASH.
EDWARD SLADE.
ROBERT FLETCHER.

1830.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Janry.	By Mr. J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings	17	10	0
	By Messrs. Turpin & Co., for binding Sessional Papers for 1828 & 1829 together, 62vols.	14	13	6
	By Mr. Wm. Browne, for Stationery	2	7	1
	By Messrs. Saunders & Benning, for Tyrwitt & Tindale's Digest of Acts & Supplement	6	11	0
	By Printers' Accounts, viz.—			
	Messrs. Gutch & Martin £13 7 6			
	Mr. Taylor 4 19 0			
	Mr. Manchee 1 14 0			
	Mr. Mills 1 9 8			
		21	10	2
	By Petty Disbursements, as per Account	9	5	11
	By Rent of Committee-Rooms to 21st Dec., including Fire, Laundress, &c	32	11	0
	By Secretary, one year's Salary to 31st Dec. last	105	0	0
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Balance carried down	80	8	10
		£300	7	6

At a Meeting of the CHAMBER, held at the Commercial Rooms, January 25, 1830,

JOSEPH COOKSON, Esq., President, in the Chair,

A Report from the Board of Directors, referring to the Proceedings of the past year, having been presented and read,

It was Resolved unanimously,

1st.—That the Report now read be received and approved.

2nd.—That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors of the Chamber, for their valuable services, in the efficient discharge of the several duties of their office through the past year.

3rd.—That this Meeting is gratified by the promptitude with which the Society of Merchant Venturers have adopted and matured the proposition for the Suspension Bridge across the Avon, an undertaking in every point of view deserving the support of the Public, as calculated to produce extensive benefit to this City and its Neighbourhood.

4th.—That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Mr. Davis and Mr. Bright, for their attention to the communications of the Chamber in the past year.

5th.—That this Meeting recommends to the Board the instituting an inquiry into the exact distance between the Post Offices of London and Bristol, with a view to ascertain whether the Rate of Postage at present demanded is correct.

6th.—That after the Ballot is taken this Meeting do adjourn to Monday next, the 1st of February, at 12 o'clock, at the Committee-Rooms, St. Stephen-Street, to conclude the regular business of the Annual Meeting; and that in the mean time the Report of the Board of Directors be printed and distributed, in order that the Members may have the opportunity of considering and of adopting, if it shall be deemed advisable, the suggestions it contains.

JOSEPH COOKSON, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

The business of the Adjourned Meeting will be to receive the Report of the Scrutineers on the Ballot for new Directors, to elect a President and two Vice-Presidents, to appoint three Auditors of Accounts, and to discuss any of the subjects referred to in the Report, which may be brought under consideration.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

Printed at the Bristol Mirror Office by J. Taylor.

6th.—That after the Ballot is taken this Meeting do adjourn to Monday next, the 1st of February, at 12 o'clock, at the Committee-Rooms, St. Stephen-Street, to conclude the regular business of the Annual Meeting; and that in the mean time the Report of the Board of Directors be printed and distributed; in order that the Members may have the opportunity of considering and of adopting, if it shall be deemed advisable, the suggestions it contains.

JOSEPH COOKSON, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

The business of the Adjourned Meeting will be to receive the Report of the Scrutineers on the Ballot for new Directors, to elect a President and two Vice-Presidents, to appoint three Auditors of Accounts, and to discuss any of the subjects referred to in the Report, which may be brought under consideration.

LIONEL BIGG, Secretary.

Printed at the Bristol Mirror Office by J. Taylor.

BRISTOL

Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT

FROM

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE

CHAMBER,

At the Annual Meeting held January 31st, 1831,

AT THE

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY T. J. MANCHEE.

REPORT.

Your Board, on this Eighth Anniversary of the Institution, present a report of their proceedings in the past year.

In pursuance of a resolution, passed at the last general Meeting, recommending "that an inquiry should be instituted into the exact distance between the Post Offices of London and Bristol, with a view to ascertain whether the rate of postage demanded was correct," Your Board applied to the Turnpike Commissioners for the several Districts on the line of Road, soliciting that they would supply a statement of the precise extent of ground over which the Mail Coach travelled comprised in their respective trusts, taking into the calculation all recent improvements, or any in progress, and distinguishing the commencement and termination of each district. From these returns, which the Commissioners ordered to be prepared, and for which in several instances admeasurements were expressly made, the fact, as to the exact

Board felt called upon to remonstrate, and to urge that some other means should be devised for cleansing their works, which should not be attended with so great interruption to Commerce, and with so general inconvenience. On the conference with the Company, it appeared there had been many representations of the accumulation of mud, and that their engineers had advised there was no other effectual mode of removing the obstructions except by the means proposed; the Company, therefore, could not be prevailed upon to alter their arrangements. It being impossible to avert the evil, your Board, with a view to prevent a recurrence of the kind, appointed a Committee to watch the progress of cleansing the Harbour by the scouring, from whose personal inspection, aided by a competent surveyor, a report has been obtained of its effect during the long period of its operation. The Company must be aware that the public cannot submit to such repeated and serious obstructions to the ordinary business of the Port as have of late years been occasioned by the periodical withdrawing of the water. The original Act for constructing the Float provided, that the Dock of the Society of Merchant Venturers should be kept in repair, and a communication made from Cumberland Basin, for the purpose

of receiving the Shipping during the interval of the Harbour being laid dry; this provision was repealed by a subsequent Act, passed for improving the original plan, by erecting a pier at Prince's-street, and separating, by a Cassoon, the branch of the Avon from that of the Froome, the declared purpose of such new works being to keep the one branch full, whilst the other branch should be laid dry. The obvious intention of the Legislature therefore, in sanctioning this substitution of plan, was to give the public increased accommodation, by having the water maintained in one or other of these branches; and this alone could have induced the Legislature to repeal the clauses in the original Act, which did, in a limited degree, supply the accommodation by means of the Floating Dock. Unfortunately the Act has not declared it to be imperative on the Company to apply these substituted works to the purposes they were especially designed to answer, and hence it is the public are liable to these frequent annoyances. The investigation of the subject, arising out of the proceedings of several Merchants on the last occasion, has led to a more accurate knowledge of the rights of the Company and of the public in this respect, and the Board hope the Company will of themselves adopt some less objectionable plan for cleansing the Harbour.

In the course of the last session of Parliament, your Board petitioned the Legislature, praying for the repeal of the Receipt-Stamp duty, and in favour of the opening the Trade to China, and free intercourse with India. On the intended alteration in the law of arrest on mesne process for debts under £100, forming part of the Bill introduced for the abolition of the Welsh Judicature, it was considered necessary to take the direction of the Chamber by a Special Meeting. The Petition adopted, praying that the clause might not pass into a law, was presented, and supported by our Members, and by this, and similar expressions of public opinion, the Government were prevailed upon to abandon this objectionable part of an otherwise desirable measure.

Your Board have been engaged in an inquiry into the expediency of establishing a Light-House on the Nash-Point, in the Bristol Channel. The following Memorial, presented to the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House, and the reply of that body, will put the Chamber in possession of the circumstances connected with the application. The Board are acting in concert with the Society of Merchant Venturers, whose opinion, as having the management of the Channel Pilotage, and therefore possessing

superior means of information, your Board solicited, and on which the Society promptly undertook an investigation. The subject is still under consideration; and the Board anticipate that some arrangement will eventually be effected with the Trinity House, for obtaining the light without any material addition to the present Tolls.

(Copy.)

"*To the Hon. the Corporation of the Trinity House.*

"The Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Trade, and Manufactures, established in the City of Bristol.

"A requisition from twenty-six Branch Pilots and thirty-nine Masters of Vessels of the Port of Bristol having been received, requesting the interference of the Chamber of Commerce in promoting an application to your Honourable Board for the establishment of a light on a dangerous point in the Bristol Channel, called the Nash-Point, your Memorialists caused an inquiry to be instituted into the necessity of the proposed addition to the safeguards along the line of coast, and, for greater certainty, requested the incorporated Society of Merchant Venturers in this City, under whose authority the Branch Pilots are placed, and under whose supervision the pilotage or navigation of the Channel so far as respects the Port of Bristol is considered to fall, to contribute their assistance in the requisite investigation of the subject.

"The report of this Body, which your Memorialists learn has been transmitted to your Board direct by Mr.

Thomas Durbin Brice, the Master for the current year, approves, in such unequivocal terms, the proposed improvements, and corresponds so fully with the views entertained by your Memorialists, that the expediency of the measure, so far as regards the increased safety of the navigation and the existing risk for the want of it, is clearly proved. The doubt your Memorialists feel is on the capability of the trade, under the present reduced scale of freights, and the general depression of the Shipping Interests, to bear any additional tolls, as an equivalent to your Board for the requisite outlay; the imposition of even a trifling amount per ton on an already heavy class of tolls, which those of the Bristol Channel comprize, being a serious consideration to the Ship-owner, and a detriment to the trading interests of every port required to contribute.

"Under this conviction your Memorialists are induced to hope that the increased revenue, which has of late years accrued to your Board from the Channel Light Dues by reason of the additional number of vessels in the trade, will justify the suggestion, made by the Society of Merchant Venturers, for your Board affording the desired protection without the creation of any additional toll, and that such proposition will be favourably received by your Board.

"Your Memorialists take leave to add, that the laying down Buoys on the Hook, the Spit, and the English Grounds, all of which are dangerous shoals in the Channel, would be an important advantage to the navigation.

"In addressing your Board on the foregoing subject, your Memorialists avail themselves of the opportunity

presented of calling your attention to the circumstance of a toll having been imposed some few years since, and which is still collected, from the vessels entering the Port of Bristol, for maintaining a light at Burnham, the entrance of the Bridgewater river, a Beacon of benefit to the Port of Bridgewater solely, and in every respect a light belonging exclusively to that Port, and under no circumstances capable of being treated as facilitating the general channel navigation. Presuming your Board inadvertently made the grant of this toll in its undue extent of operation on the trade of the Port of Bristol, and that your Board has power to correct the evil, your Memorialists solicit a favourable consideration of the subject thus adverted to, with a view to relief being granted by a revocation of the impost.

By the Board,

"THOMAS STOCK,

"President."

"Bristol, December 6, 1830."

"Trinity House, London, 1st January, 1831.

"Sir,

"I have it in command to acknowledge the receipt of the Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Trade, and Manufactures, established in the City of Bristol, communicating the entire concurrence of that body in the opinion universally entertained of the advantages and security which navigation in the Bristol Channel would derive from the establishment

of lights upon the Nash-Point; but expressing a hope, for the reasons stated in the Memorial, that the desired protection might be afforded without the creation of any additional toll.

"And the representations contained in the said Memorial having received due consideration, I am directed to acquaint you, for the information of the Memorialists, that the Elder Brethren receive with great satisfaction the expression of the concurrence of the Chamber of Commerce of Bristol in the proposed measure; but they regret extremely that any desire is entertained that the contemplated advantages should be rendered to the trade without payment of a remunerating rate of charge for the erection and maintenance of the establishments from which those advantages are to be derived. And, in communicating to you that this Corporation declines to accede to the request of the Chamber of Commerce, I am to observe, that the Elder Brethren entertained an expectation that no objection could be offered to the payment of the moderate rate of toll proposed for these intended lights. And that this expectation has been justified by the concurrence of the trade at the principal Ports interested in their establishment.

"In respect to that part of the Memorial, wherein it is requested that certain Buoys may be laid down for the guidance of ships and vessels in the Bristol Channel, I am directed to acquaint you, that this Corporation is ready to lay down all necessary Buoys in that navigation whenever the general trade thereof shall express a wish for the same, and their consent to contribute a reasonable toll for providing, placing, and maintaining them.

"The application of the Memorialists, in relation to the light at the River Parret, has also received due consideration, and the Elder Brethren regret that the revenue, derived from the tolls payable for the maintenance of that light, is too small to admit of their compliance with the request that the Port of Bristol may be exempted from payment of that toll. On reviewing the circumstances which attended the improvement of that light in the year 1815, and the legal establishment of tolls on shipping for its support, the Board perceives that some objections to the charge, as applying to the Port of Bristol, were then expressed on the part of the incorporated Society of Merchant Venturers; but it also appears that a requisition for the improvement of that light, on payment of the tolls which have been since received, was transmitted from the Port of Bristol, signed by two hundred and five owners and masters of Vessels, several of whom were stated to have been, at that time, members of the said incorporated Society at that Port. In this requisition the subscribing parties distinctly state that the said light is often of much service to vessels bound up Channel to Bristol. In support of that allegation, Affidavits to the same effect were then made by practical men; and there can be no doubt that the light, at the entrance of the river Parret, was at that time, and still continues to be, of service in many instances to vessels bound to the Port of Bristol.

"The Elder Brethren direct me to remark, in conclusion, that this Board has evinced, and still continues to entertain, an earnest desire, to relieve the shipping interests from charges payable to this Corporation, so

far as may be consistent with its charitable, and other uses, purposes, and intents. And, adverting to the various reductions of tolls, and exemptions from payment of Light Dues to this Corporation, which have been effected by the Elder Brethren in the last few years, they observe that the trade of the Port of Bristol has very largely participated in the relief afforded by those reductions and exemptions; and which, indeed, have been so considerable, that, contrary to the statement contained in the Memorial of the Chamber of Commerce, the actual revenue of this Corporation accruing from tolls upon shipping, has been thereby greatly reduced as compared with its amount prior to the time at which those reductions and exemptions took effect.

"I am,

Sir,

"Your very obedient Servant,

(Addressed) "J. HERBERT,

"Thomas Stock, Esq., "Secretary."

"President of the Chamber of Commerce."

The following statements of the Foreign and Irish Trade, will convey useful information on the commercial operations of the Port. The decrease in the Import of Sugar in the last, as compared with the former, year is attributable to the short crops of last season. The decrease in Timber arises from the diversion to Gloucester, of part of the supply for that district which here-

tofore came to Bristol, but now goes direct to Gloucester. In the Irish trade the increase is considerable.

Statement of Sundry Foreign *Goods* imported *into the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, *and* 1830.

		1827	1828	1829	1830
Sugars, West India,	Hogsheads	26057	31644	31418	27743
———	Tierces	1760	2308	2762	2243
———	Barrels	1438	1398	1885	969
——— East India and Mauritius	Bags	....	....	4297	10496
Coffee and Cocoa	Casks	376	470	449	394
———	Bags	1085	981	412	186
Pepper	Bags	....	....	139	158
Spirits	Pipes	4002	3425	3185	4186
———	Hogsheads	1194	980	1180	1378
Tobacco	Hogsheads	1262	1163	773	1186
Wine	Pipes	1181	2207	1619	1383
———	Hogsheads	1155	1852	1040	1386
———	Cases	488	571	525	719
———	Casks	229	936	259	1038
Timber, American	Pieces	18371	13638	19593	11826
——— European	Pieces	3078	2894	3741	2598
Deals, American	Long Hundreds	358	415	522	201
——— European	Long Hundreds	637	705	548	545
Wool	Bags	3809	1062	2108	2157
Cotton United States	Bales	....	203	....	....
——— British	Bales	492	898	286	109
Corn	Quarters	....	....	61397	74297

Statement of value *of Sundry* British *Goods* exported *to* Foreign *Parts from the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, *and* 1830.

	1827	1828	1829	1830
Woollen Goods	26571	26249	22584	18736
Cotton Goods	13,003	14573	20154	14702
Linens	11,610	13471	10032	12583
Hardware	373	406	740	347
Earthenware	5667	3489	3629	2330
Chaldrons of Coal	4256	3634	4525	4367
Bushels of Salt	128,564	97,404	75,233	73,875
Exports paying Export Duty	422,100	414,288	399,805	429,352

Statement of British *Vessels entered* inwards *from Foreign Parts to the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 830.

	1827	1828	1829	1830
Number of Vessels.....	417	374	371	364
Tonnage of the same	76397	67331	72384	68241

Statement of Foreign *Vessels entered* inwards *from Foreign Parts to the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830.

	1827	1828	1829	1830
Number of Vessels.....	72	60	63	48
Tonnage of the same	8333	8378	7891	7056

Statement of British *Vessels entered* outwards *for Foreign Parts from the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830.

	1827	1828	1829	1830
Number of Vessels.....	245	247	242	256
Tonnage of the same	51167	50283	49836	50797

Statement of Foreign *Vessels entered* outwards *for Foreign Parts from the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830.

	1827	1828	1829	1830
Number of Vessels.....	24	21	23	19
Tonnage of the same	3589	3496	3298	3610

Statement of the number of Vessels belonging to the Port of Bristol, for the years 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830.

	1827	1828	1829	1830
Vessels belonging to Bristol	283	300	319	323
Of which employed at other Ports or laid up	22	31	30	32

Statement of the number of vessels cleared outwards for Ireland, *the total value of British Goods, and the quantities of refined Sugar, raw Sugar, and Tea, shipped from Bristol to* Ireland, *for the year* 1824, *being the year before the Town Dues were taken off,* 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, *and* 1830,—1826 *having likewise been the year of the introduction of Steam conveyance for goods.*

	1824	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830
No. of Vessels	113	198	278	314	342	364
Value of Brit. Goods	126,999	195,909	294,200	341,875	294,573	304,659
Refined Sugar, Cwt.	3,596	7,796	20,188	27,719	27,233	37,793
Raw Sugar, .. Cwt.	190	10,426	4,043	17,157	9,421	9,830
Tea .....Lbs.	6	22,368	49,627	50,349	53,976	51,687

Statement of the number of vessels entered into the Port of Bristol from Ireland, and the quantities of sundry goods imported from Ireland, for the year 1824, *being the year before the Town Dues were taken off,* 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, *and* 1830,—1826, *having likewise been the year of the introduction of Steam conveyance for goods.*

		1824	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830
Vessels....	Number	457	505	731	801	930	726
	Tons	38,709	39,295	83,193	100,640	102,394	91,099
Oats, ...	quarters	28,895	63,038	74.505	124,710	63,183	49,064
Barley, ..	quarters	5,789	8,569	2,841	2,265	13,767	25,022
Wheat, ..	quarters	22,752	15,836	18,669	36,381	45,456	51,179
Flour, ...	quarters	20,227	4,183	6,467	23,719	42,235	57,085
Cattle, ..	head	1,496	550	2,818	4,535	10,498	6,265
Sheep.....	....	526	1625	4,765	5,716	9,555	19,700
Pigs, ...		24,936	26,047	89,580	37,250	62,163	85,208
Horses		26	25	56	21	267	284
Potatoes, ..	tons	2	575	80	130	2,878	1,813
Butter, ...	cwt.	15,244	14,900	37,164	43500	32,607	32,000
Bacon,....	Cwt.	13,778	4,745	.....	....	....	....
	Bales	...	1,138	7,015	5,384	5,434	6,107
Lard	Cwt.	452	530	1,400	2,030	720	1,614
Salmon ..	Cwt.	29	.....	....	....	....	...
	Barrels	....	28	19	....	....	...
	Boxes	....	342	2839	414	724	2,644
	Kits	....	933	.....	.....	.....	41

Several of the projected Improvements in the City and neighbourhood, noticed in the last Report, are in progress. The Bill for the erection of the Suspension Bridge across the Avon passed the legislature last session, and several of the more preferable plans for carrying the undertaking into effect have been selected by the Committee, with a view to their being submitted to Mr. Davies Gilbert, the late President of the Royal Society, who has promised his opinion on their merits and eligibility, for the guidance of the Committee in deciding upon the one to be ultimately adopted. This work is important, as essential to the establishment of a daily communication by Mail Steam Packets from this Port to the South of Ireland, the accomplishment of which, however distant it may at present appear, must ultimately be secured to the City, if the spirit of improvement is kept alive, and a proper direction given to it.

The Hotel at Portishead, which will also in some degree promote this object, is completed.

Considerable progress has been made in the Bristol and Gloucestershire Railway, and the Company have determined on constructing their Tunnel to admit of its serving for a double line, in anticipation of a junction at some future period with the Birmingham Railway, the ex-

tension of which to Gloucester, and probably thence to Bath, is in contemplation. Such an addition would complete the inland communication with the manufacturing districts of the north of England, and be of infinite advantage to the city, in enabling it to maintain its rank as a foreign port. It is expected that the upper branch of the line will be completed and become passable by midsummer, and that the whole will be finished in the course of next year.

To the examination of Bills passing through Parliament, and other Parliamentary proceedings affecting trade, your Board have given their best attention. The Bute or Cardiff Canal Bill was carefully watched, and some clauses introduced to guard more effectually the Interests of this Port. The Bill brought in by the Corporation of the Poor of the city has likewise been examined. The object of this Bill is chiefly to enable this Corporation to purchase some Premises in Stapleton-road, which are represented as highly desirable for accommodating part of their establishment, which must be removed from the present house, and to effect the sale of some estates in relief of the attendant expences.

Since the last General Meeting several public Bills have passed the legislature, which are of importance to the trading interests. That for

the abolition of the Welsh Judicature, the appointment of three new Judges, and the empowering the Judges to make rules and regulations for the practice of their courts, will be found in operation to be of infinite benefit. The five Bills brought in by Lord Tenterden are likewise calculated to be of essential service: the first, entitled "an Act to enable courts of Law to order the examination of witnesses upon interrogatories," gives to the Judges extensive authority for meeting the public necessities in this respect. The second, entitled "an Act to improve the proceedings in prohibition and on writs of Mandamus," introduces some needful alterations in these descriptions of action. The third, entitled "an Act to enable Courts of Law to give relief against adverse claims made upon persons having no interest in the subject of such claims," will bring the parties, between whom the question lies, immediately in contact, and relieve, in a summary manner, from the responsibility of his situation, the intermediate party having no interest, and being merely *custos* of the fund or property in dispute; Sheriffs and other public officers, with whom such cases more frequently occur, and also masters and owners of vessels, will herein experience great convenience. The fourth is entitled "an Act for settling controversies by arbitration." The

object is to promote references in matters of account, by enabling a Judge before trial or the court at the trial, to order that the question be referred to an arbitrator, to be chosen by the parties, or otherwise to be nominated by the Judge or Court; to give power to arbitrators to compel the attendance of witnesses, to prevent any revocation of the consent to refer, and to supply some other defects, and correct some disadvantages, incident to proceedings by arbitration. The fifth is entitled "an Act for the more speedy judgment and execution in actions brought in his Majesty's Courts of Law at Westminster." The object here is to give plaintiffs the benefit of their verdicts by enabling the Judge to certify that execution ought immediately to issue, thus obviating the delay which previously arose by the interval between the assizes and the ensuing term, during which period, and particularly between July and November, the debtor, becoming insolvent, deprived the suitor of the benefit of his verdict. These alterations proceed from the recommendation of the Commissioners, appointed by his late Majesty, for inquiring into, and reporting upon, the practice of the Courts of Common Law; and they appear to be the commencement of an improved system in the administration of Justice which will conduce to the welfare of the trading community. Other

measures to the same end are in progress; but they are not arrived at that state of maturity to enable the Board to form any conclusive opinion on them. The three principal Bills recently introduced with this object are entitled, 1st, "An Act for establishing Courts of local Jurisdiction," brought in by the Lord Chancellor; the 2d, "An Act to prevent the expence and delay of suits in the Common Law Courts at Westminster," brought in by Lord Wynford; and the 3d, "for establishing a general register for all deeds and instruments affecting real property in England and Wales," brought in by Mr. Campbell. The Local Court Bill applies at present to the Counties of Kent, Durham, and Northumberland only; but it is framed with a view to its being extended to the whole kingdom, if the experiment should prove to be advantageous. It is in effect creating local County Courts under a resident Judge for Trial by Jury at monthly Sessions, to be holden in different towns in the county, of all actions of debt or account, or breach of agreement, &c., for amounts not exceeding £100, and of personal *tort*, such as assault, slander, &c., where the amount sought to be recovered does not exceed £50. The Court is also empowered to determine by summary process without Jury in cases of debt, not exceeding £5; to enforce the payment of

legacies in amount not exceeding £100; to undertake references by arbitration; and to act by hearing and advice as a Court of Reconcilement. The Bill is of great length, and has evidently been prepared with the intention of establishing an expeditious and economical mode of determining questions of limited amount. It is, however, very difficult to frame a general law of extensive operation, which in its application shall suit the various circumstances and situations of every part of the kingdom. Thus it is that with all the advantages this measure offers, there are coupled with them provisions which will be seriously disadvantageous to the citizens of Bristol, in common with the traders of all places having commercial connections in extensive districts, comprising several counties. The provision that the Defendant's residence, or where the cause of action arises, shall determine the county in which the action shall be brought, will render it necessary for the wholesale traders to resort to these County Courts, however great the distance may be, to have professional agents there, and to send their witnesses to these distant places on the trial of their causes. At present the party suing tries his cause near to his own place of abode, where generally his witnesses also reside; and this difference is of considerable im-

portance, the travelling and tavern expences of witnesses being in all Common Law Suits a chief disbursement. The power vested in the Judge of staying execution on a verdict, and ordering payment by instalments, will greatly protract the receipt of the debt; and the clause for staying execution on the defendant assigning debts, which the Plaintiff may sue for and recover in the debtor's name, is likewise highly objectionable. On the details of the Bill, in defining the form of proceedings for these Courts, the right of appeal, and its other machinery, your Board do not venture an opinion, except that they appear to introduce a wholesome brevity and intelligible style of expression into the forms of proceedings, all which is greatly needed. Your Board direct their attention chiefly to the convenience and advantage which the trading interests will be likely to experience, in resorting to the proposed new courts in substitution of the superior Courts at Westminster, and, confining themselves to this view, they will endeavour, as the Bill proceeds through its several stages, to point out what may appear to them to fail of answering the purpose intended, and what alterations may suggest themselves as calculated to meet such purpose. One great cause of expence and difficulty in the recovery of debts, arises from the debtor being

unconfined to any point of defence. If, in his plea or answer to the Plaintiff's statement of claim, he were required to specify his grounds of defence, the real question would be raised and brought to issue, and the evidence to be adduced directed to the disputed points, thus relieving the plaintiff from the necessity of being prepared to meet every objection to his demand which ingenuity may suggest. It should be recollected that in a very large proportion of suits no real defence exists. The debtor avails himelf of the law's delay, of the difficulty, expence, and trouble which attend a trial of even the ordinary class of claims, and of the apprehension with regard to expences which influences his creditor; nor is this apprehension unfounded ; for, by the facility of escape afforded by the Insolvent Debtor's law, the fruits of prosecuting a just demand are often frustrated by the debtors resorting to the protection of the Insolvent Court, in which event, the creditor almost invariably loses his whole debt, to which is superadded the loss of his costs of suit. The evil therefore of this state of things is very serious, and requires immediate and judicious amendment. The object of the Bill introduced by Lord Wynford is to compel, before trial, the production for inspection of documents in the hands of adverse parties, and to promote the admission or proof of such docu-

ments; also to enable adverse parties to elicit facts material to their case by examination under interrogatories, with a view to supersede the present proceeding by a Bill of Discovery in Chancery. The object of the Bill, introduced by Mr. Campbell, is to have all Title Deeds registered, and the title of every man's property kept like a ledger account. The subjects of which these two Bills treat are not of a nature to enable the Board to enter into the details with any expectation of arriving at a safe conclusion; and they are rather alluded to here for the information of the Chamber to lead members to inquiry if they should be so inclined.

Your Board, in their last Report, adverted to the increased expence attending the prosecution of Commissions of Bankrupt in the country, by reason of the alteration in the fees from £3 to £5 for each Meeting. In the City of London, where the lesser sum is paid, the commercial public are seeking to establish an improved system; it would be desirable, in case any change should take place, to procure a return to the former and more economical plan which so long prevailed in practice in the country, there being no sufficient reason why, in large towns having resident practitioners, a degree of remuneration should be given two-fold that of a Metropolitan Commissioner. If any general inquiry is in-

stituted into the practice of bankruptcy, this subject may be usefully submitted to the authorities for consideration. The generality of bankruptcy cases, conducted in this city and neighbourhood, being those of country shopkeepers with small estates, this difference of expence is felt as diminishing the assets for division.

On all these subjects the Board look for assistance and co-operation to the members of the Chamber engaged in those branches of trade most affected, their experience and knowledge being essential to the due prosecution of any improvements that may be desired. In conclusion, your Board would observe that they have endeavoured to the utmost of their ability to fulfil the purposes of their appointment. They also have pleasure in acknowledging the attention and support they have received from the Members in Parliament for the city, in the several communications with them during the past year.

The account of receipt and expenditure is subjoined.

THOMAS STOCK.
President.

Bristol, January 26, 1831.

Dr. **THE BRISTOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.** *Cr.*

1830.	RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan.	Balance in Treasurer's hands, as per last Account	80	8	10
Dec. 31.	One arrear of 1828	1	1	0
	Two ditto of 1829	2	2	0
	Amount received from 218 Members for the year ending 31st Dec., 1830	228	18	0
		£312	9	10
1831.				
Jan.	Balance brought down and in the hands of Treasurer	97	7	10

January 29, 1831.

Audited and Examined,

JAMES E. NASH.

ROBERT FLETCHER.

EDWARD SLADE.

1831.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan.	Mr. J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings	17	11	0
	Mr. Wm. Browne, for Stationery	1	1	6
	Messrs. Sanders and Benning, for continuation of Statutes	4	8	0
	Mr. Armstrong, for Survey of Harbour when the Water was withdrawn, and his Report thereon	8	8	0
	Printers, viz. Messrs. Gutch & Martin 4 6 11			
	Mr. Taylor 17 16 2			
	Mr. Somerton 1 15 0			
	Mr. Mills 2 2 2			
	Mr. Manchee 3 5 0			
		29	5	3
	Petty Disbursements as per Account	6	14	3
	Rent of Committee-Rooms to 21st Dec., including Fire, Laundress, &c.	32	11	0
	Secretary, one year's Salary to 21st Dec.	105	0	0
	Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	Balance carried down	97	0	10
		£312	9	10

At a Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held at the Commercial Rooms, January 31, 1831;

THO. STOCK, Esq. President, in the Chair;

A Report from the Board of Directors, referring to the proceedings of the past year, having been presented and read,

It was resolved unanimously,—

1.—That the Report now read be received and approved; and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Chairman.

2.—That the thanks of this meeting be given to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors, for the zeal and ability with which they have discharged the several duties of their office.

3.—That the Chairman be requested to transmit to our present Members in Parliament, and our late Member, Henry Bright, Esq., the thanks of this Meeting for the services rendered by them to the Chamber in the past year on subjects before Parliament.

4.—That the Board be requested to direct their attention to the mode of executing Commissions of Bankrupt in the Country, and to form a Committee to co-operate with that formed in London on the subject, in order that, in any alteration which may be effected, the interests of the Commercial Public in the Country may be duly regarded; and in particular, that the

rate of commissioners' fees, increased on the late amendment of the Bankrupt Law, may be reduced to the former scale, and the attendance of more than one Barrister be dispensed with.

5.—That, after the Ballot is taken, this Meeting do adjourn to Monday next, the 7th of February, at Twelve o'clock, at the Committee-Room, St. Stephen-Street, to conclude the regular business of the Annual Meeting.

6.—That the foregoing Resolutions be published once in each of the Bristol Papers.

THOMAS STOCK, Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.

LIONEL OLIVER BIGG,
Secretary.

T: J. Manchee, Printer, Bristol.

BRISTOL

Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT

FROM

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO THE

CHAMBER,

At the Annual Meeting, held January 30th, 1832,

AT THE

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY W. H. SOMERTON, NARROW WINE-STREET.

REPORT.

THE Regulations of your Institution, requiring a detail to the Annual Meeting of the proceedings during the past year, your Board present the following as their report.

The requisition detailed in a former report for changing the route of the London Mail from Chippenham to Bristol, by the line of Marshfield instead of Bath, as shortening the distance and reducing the Postage of all Letters to and from London one penny, has been pursued, and the President held a conference with Sir F. Freeling on the subject; but though every due consideration was promised, the alteration has not yet been acceded to: the application will nevertheless be renewed. That department has however adopted another important proposition of the Chamber, namely, The establishment of a Mail between this city and Liverpool, by a direct line through Chepstow, Monmouth, Hereford, Shrewsbury, and Chester, starting and arriving at the most convenient hours the distance and circumstances, with reference to the passage of the two rivers, will permit, and in

all respects advancing materially the means and facility of communication with Liverpool and the different other towns in the line. The convenience of this new improvement is already sensibly felt, and the advantage will be duly appreciated; compared with the former route, the saving of time is equal to one day; the rate of postage is likewise reduced.

The establishment of this Mail was announced in the following letter of Sir F. Freeling, and it may be hoped, that such encouragement will be given as will ensure its permanency.

"General Post Office, 27th August, 1831.

"Sir,

"Having brought under consideration the Memorial from the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Bristol, and from the Bankers, Merchants, and other inhabitants of Liverpool, transmitted in your letter of the 2d May last, I have the satisfaction to acquaint you that his Grace the Postmaster General, has consented to try the experiment of a Mail Coach between those towns, through Chepstow, Hereford, and Monmouth, and I flatter myself that it may commence about the middle of next month.

"I have the honor to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient Servant,

"F. FREELING, Secretary."

Addressed to "Samuel Harford, Esq.

"President of the Chamber of Commerce, Bristol."

Your Board have not been unmindful of the unsatisfactory state of the Floating Harbour by reason of the accumulations of mud in several parts, preventing vessels, in numerous instances, reaching the Quays, without partially unloading to reduce their draught of water, thereby occasioning great expence, delay, and inconvenience. Deeming it necessary, from the numerous instances of loss sustained, that a direct remonstrance should be presented to the Dock Company, your Board transmitted to that body the following communication :

At a Meeting of a Committee, appointed by the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held on the 6th of July, 1831;

SAMUEL HARFORD, Esq. in the Chair:

The following minute was agreed to, and ordered to be transmitted to the Dock Company.

Representations having been made to the Chamber of Commerce, that accumulations of mud or silt have formed in several parts of the Floating Harbour, which prevent large vessels belonging to the port from being brought up to the Quays, unless first lightened; the Board of Directors have been induced to appoint a Commitee, for the purpose of communicating with the Dock Company on the evil complained of.

The Committee have ascertained that these representations are correct, that remonstrances have been

repeatedly made to the Dock Company by individuals, that the evil has gradually increased for a long time past, and is now of serious extent. In thus addressing themselves to the Dock Company on the unsatisfactory state of the Floating Harbour, the Committee consider it to be incumbent on the Company to apply an efficient remedy, and that their obligation therein admits of no question. The Committee feel it right to observe, that the expedients hitherto resorted to have, in their view, failed, in a great degree, to effect the purpose intended, and that, in particular, the draining the both branches of the Harbour at the same time and the consequent process of scouring, is attended with such interruption to the trade of the port, and proves so ineffectual in its operation, that they must protest against any such means being relied on or again pursued.

(Signed,) SAMUEL HARFORD, Chairman.

"Bristol, 24th August, 1831.

"Dear Sir,

"The resolution of the Chamber of Commerce, relative to the state of the Floating Harbour, forwarded by you on the 7th of July, has been submitted to the Board of Dock Directors, by whom I am desired to repeat the assurances contained in my letter of the 12th of July, that the subject is under the consideration of a Committee specially appointed, with a view to determine the most effectual mode of scouring, when the water is let off for the purpose.

"I am, dear Sir, yours, truly,

"JERE OSBORNE."

Addressed to "Mr. L. O. Bigg,

"Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce."

At a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, held Sept. 5th, 1831;

W. E. ACRAMAN, Esq. in the Chair:

Read letters of Mr. Jere Osborne, under dates of the 12th July and 24th August, stating, that the Dock Company have specially appointed a Committee, with a view to determine the most effectual mode of scouring the Harbour, when the water is let off for the purpose.

RESOLVED, That the Board are gratified to find the Dock Company are directing their attention to the removal of the accumulations of mud and silt, which have formed in several parts of the Floating Harbour; it appears, however, from the communications read, that the Company have determined on effecting their purpose by the process of scouring; the Board therefore, deem it right to caution the Dock Company against the adoption of any plan for the more effectual operation of this process, which shall involve the necessity of draining the both branches of the Harbour at the same time; a measure decidedly contrary to the spirit of the Acts of Parliament, one which the Chamber has heretofore protested against, and which, being productive of extensive and serious inconvenience and prejudice to the commercial and trading interests of the city, the Dock Company cannot be warranted in resorting to, if the object can be accomplished by any other means. The Board feel satisfied there are other and equally eligible means within the power of the Company; and therefore, the more strongly urge this point on their consideration.

(Signed,) W. E. ACRAMAN, Chairman.

No further reply has been yet received from the Dock Company, and your Board have refrained from renewing their remonstrance, solely because the late unfortunate disturbances, and the press of business resulting from them, may have interrupted the proceedings of the Dock Directors, and prevented their devoting due attention to this particular subject. The Chamber may be assured, that the matter shall be immediately resumed. The obligation of the Company to keep the navigation free, and the Quays accessible, is beyond dispute, and may be easily enforced; and, with the support of the commercial interests, the Board will not be unwilling to take the requisite steps for maintaining the public rights.

The Bills, of a commercial character, passing through Parliament in the last year, have been so few in number, and the progress of these few so irregular in their several stages, that the Board have been prevented interfering in any one of them. The Act, for the management of the Customs, with reference to the fees paid on the granting of Cockets, on the policy and true construction of which Act, as applying to the outports considerable doubt has arisen, was brought into the House of Commons on the 28th Sept. was read a second time and ordered to be printed

on the 1st October, and passed the House of Commons on the 6th October; and having passed in like manner the House of Lords, received the royal consent on the 15th of October. The Board had therefore no opportunity of ascertaining the particular object of the Bill, or its precise operation on the regulations of the Customs, as applied to this out-port; it was also generally understood, that the intention of Government was to confine the proposed alteration to the port of London.

On several subjects affecting particular branches of trade, assistance to members interested therein has been rendered. The application by the holders of stocks of printed cottons, for the return of duties or other indemnity from loss, on the remission by the Legislature of the impost on that article of manufacture, was supported by a petition. The reduction of the duty on sugar, as calculated to afford relief to our Colonial interests and those dependant on them, was brought under consideration; as was also the correspondence between the Society of Merchant Venturers and the Trinity House, on the rate of duties to be imposed, as a revenue for erecting and maintaining the new Light on the Nass Point in the Bristol Channel. In these and every other subject, which was within the scope

of the Chamber's proper interference, every endeavour has been used to meet the purposes designed on the formation of the Institution.

It was intended to make up a return of the Foreign imports and exports, the number and tonnage of vessels entering the port, and the extent of the Irish trade of the port, for the last year, in continuation of the documents under these heads which appeared in the last Report. In this the Board have been disappointed: the loss of some of the papers on the destruction of the Custom-House rendering it difficult to complete the statements with accuracy, and the Board preferring to wait until a succeeding year, to the insertion of any that may be questionable in their result.

The account of receipt and expenditure is subjoined; the addition in the charge for the Parliamentary proceedings, arises from two sessions being held in one year, and which two-fold charge is represented to be regular under such circumstances.

It would be desirable to recruit the list of members to supply the deficiency in number, as compared with last year, arising from unavoidable causes.

(By the Board,) W. S. Jacques, Chairman.

DR.....THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ACCOUNT CONTRA.....CR.

1831.	RECEIPTS.	£.	s.	d.
Jan.	To Balance in Treasurers' hands, as per last Account	97	0	10
Dec. 31.	To Two Arrears of Annual Subscription for 1830	2	2	0
	To Amount received from 187 Members, for the year ending 31st Dec. 1831	196	7	0
		£295	9	10
	To Balance brought down in the hands of Treasurers	70	13	5

January 28, 1832,

Audited and Examined,

JAMES EZEKIEL NASH
ROBERT FLETCHER
EDWARD SLADE.

1832.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan.	By Mr. J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings, Two Sessions in the Year	34	12	0
	By Messrs. Browne & Reid, for Stationery ..	0	15	10
	By Messrs. Turpin & Co. Binding Sessional Papers, for 1830 and 1831	13	6	6
	By Payments for Schedules and Returns of Imports and Exports, for the years 1827 to 1830 inclusive	5	5	0
	By Printers, viz. Mess. Gutch & Martin 3 2 11			
	Mr. Taylor, Mirror 1 12 6			
	Mr. Somerton 1 6 0			
	Mr. Manchee 10 12 6			
	Mr. Mills 1 11 1			
		18	5	0
	By Petty Disbursements, as per Account	4	11	1
	By Rent of Committee-Rooms to 21st Dec. 1831, including Fire, Laundress, &c.....	32	11	0
	By Secretary, for the year ending 21st Dec. 1831	105	0	0
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Balance carried down	70	13	5
		£295	9	10

At a Meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, held at the Commercial Rooms, January 30, 1832;

W. S. JACQUES, Esq. Vice-President, in the Chair:

A Report from the Board of Directors, detailing their proceedings in the past year, having been presented and read,

It was resolved unanimously,—

1.—That the Report now read be received and approved, and that it be printed and circulated under the direction of the Chairman.

2.—That the thanks of this meeting be given to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors, for their exertions in promoting the objects of the Institution during the past year.

3.—That the Chairman be requested to transmit to our Members in Parliament the thanks of this Meeting for their attention to the communications from the Chamber.

4.—That a petition be presented to the House of Commons, from this Chamber, praying that the progress of the Bill "for consolidating and amending the Laws regulating the granting and issuing Permits for the removal of goods under the Laws of Excise," be for the present deferred, to the end that an opportunity may be afforded to the parties who will be more immediately affected, for presenting in detail the objections arising on its several provisions.

5.—That after the Ballot for New Directors is taken, this Meeting adjourn to Monday next, the 6th day of February, at Twelve o'clock, at the Committee-Room, St. Stephen Street, to conclude the regular business of the Annual Meeting.

That the foregoing Resolutions be published once in each of the Bristol Papers.

W. S. JACQUES, Chairman.

The thanks of the Meeting were then voted to the Chairman for his able and impartial conduct.

LIONEL OLIVER BIGG,
Secretary.

W. H. Somerton, Printer, Narrow Wine Street, Bristol.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TO

A GENERAL MEETING OF THE CHAMBER,

HELD THE 28TH JANUARY, 1833,

AT

THE COMMERCIAL ROOMS, BRISTOL,

AND

THE RESOLUTIONS

CONSEQUENT THEREON.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY GUTCH AND MARTIN, 15, SMALL-STREET.

1833.

BRISTOL

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

ANNUAL REPORT.

THE Board present their Report of business for the past year :—

Immediately on assembling, after their re-appointment in January last, the Board applied themselves to ascertain the liabilities of the citizens for damages sustained in the late riots, with an anxious desire to discover if any relief could be afforded against the serious consequences which then appeared to be impending. A committee was appointed, under whose directions several legal points were submitted to the opinion of counsel; the bills brought into Parliament by the Corporation were fully examined and discussed, and the different views which from time to time arose for arranging the difficulties incident to the then state of affairs, were duly considered; meanwhile the several claimants had commenced and were prosecuting their actions at law, the result of which, in even the expenses of the suits, threatened to become a material addition to the existing weight of charge. The subject being one of the highest importance, and involving great responsibility, the Board determined that the course by which they could with the greatest advantage interfere, would be by proposing a plan by which the rate-payers might associate themselves in some organized body,

by means of deputies, and so deliberate and act in furtherance of what might be found essential for protecting their mutual interests. To this end, by public advertisement as well as by private circular to the members of the Chamber, the following resolution of the Board, at a special meeting held on Feb. 29, was promulgated, in order to induce a uniformity of proceeding throughout the city :—

"That, threatened as this city is, not only with an overwhelming rate for compensating the sufferers by the late riots but also with a permanent and indefinite increase of its already oppressive local taxation,—The Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce feel the necessity of the formation of a body which should combine the requisite degree of organization with the support and confidence of all classes of their fellow-citizens, for the purpose of protecting, by all legitimate means, the interests of the city; and they respectfully recommend to the members of the Chamber, as the best means of effecting this desirable result, that they promote the immediate calling of public meetings of the rate-payers in each of the parishes, at which meetings (if such a course should meet the approbation of the inhabitants of the respective parishes) parochial committees might be formed, and two or three individuals might be appointed as delegates from each parish to act in concert as a central committee, with full powers to take such measures as may be deemed expedient."

"A Committee of the Board of Directors will meet daily at the Committee-rooms, St. Stephen-street, to receive communications and to assist in promoting the foregoing object."

The suggestion thus conveyed was quickly adopted—parochial meetings were held, deputies were appointed, and ultimately, in conjunction and by arrangement with the Corporation—from whom, as the constituted authorities, the propositions for dealing with the subject properly emanated—an Act of Parliament was obtained for duly investigating, by commissioners to be appointed at the several wardmotes, the numerous demands for damages, and for satisfying all monies which might ultimately be adjudged payable in a manner the least likely to be severely felt by the community. That this course of proceeding has been produc-

tive of very important results to the city is attributable to the exertions of the Parochial Deputies, and to the unwearied perseverance, the ability, and independent spirit, with which the respectable individuals composing the Board of Commissioners, elected under the Act, have and continue to discharge the important duties delegated to them. Of 120 cases they have already completed their investigation in 84, in all of which (with the exception of 2) their offers of satisfaction have been accepted, thereby saving to the citizens the serious legal expenses attending the trial by jury, rendering to the sufferers the degree of satisfaction which the law, according to the special nature of each case, might entitle them, but procuring a means of full and uncontrolled investigation, with that leisure for enquiry and deliberation which, under no other circumstances, could so effectually have been acquired. By the judicious manner in which this Act has been thus carried into operation, a large proportion of the claims have been adjudged in a manner satisfactory to the claimants, at a saving of several thousands of pounds to the citizens, whilst the legal obligation of compensating the sufferers has been fully carried into effect. Though the Board can claim the credit only of having originally suggested and assisted in promoting the arrangements which led to the formation of the body by whom this valuable service has been rendered, yet they derive no little gratification from the reflection that they did so contribute, and that a public body constituted like themselves, from a free election, should be found applying their talents and exertions so much to their own credit, and to the real and perceptible welfare of the city.

The appointment, by the Justices in Sessions,

of a High Constable, being indicatory of their intention to try the experiment of establishing a County-rate, the Board, on March 5th, drew up and presented to the Corporation the following Memorial :—

"To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Court of Common Council of the City of Bristol.

"The Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

"The Board of Directors are impelled by their sense of the duties imposed on them by their situation, to submit to your consideration their serious apprehensions for the welfare of the city; apprehensions which, as they have too frequent occasion to remark, are extensively and deeply shared, especially by the Commercial portion of its inhabitants.

"The Board are perfectly aware, that Bristol shares in the commercial depression common to the whole country; but they are also convinced that the largest and by far the most imminently dangerous part of the gloom which overhangs the city, is to be attributed to local causes.

"The Board will not dwell on the exertions made in past years by the Chamber of Commerce to procure an alleviation of some of the burthens which appeared to interfere the most injuriously with the commerce of the port, nor on the signal augmentation which has subsequently taken place, in that branch in which the greatest remission was effected. They cannot, however, avoid remarking, that other branches, in which little or no alteration was made, instead of increasing with the increasing trade of the country, have either remained nearly stationary or have declined.

"If any further proof were required of the absolute necessity of diminishing the municipal charges on commerce to the lowest possible point, it would be afforded in the rapid advances made by some of the smaller and comparatively untaxed ports in the vicinity, particularly by Gloucester.

"Depressed as Bristol already was—injured as it has been both in resources and in the confidence necessary to a prosperous condition of its external and internal trade, by the deplorable outrages of last October,—and by the extensive failures which have latterly occurred of houses engaged in the most important branches of its commerce, the obvious and almost only remaining hope, to which the universal expectation naturally turned, was an exposition of the state of the Civic property, and resources so full and explicit as to demonstrate either their competency under a strictly economical administration, to the exigencies of the crisis, or the amount of their deficiency, and consequently of the subsidiary supply which might be needful.

"The Board cannot imagine the existence of a good reason for withholding that information from those, whom, inasmuch as the property in question is held in trust for their especial benefit, it most

immediately concerns. They have learned, however, to their extreme disappointment, that instead of pursuing that reasonable course, measures have been taken preparatory to the levying of a county rate on the whole rateable property of the city: a tax which the citizens of Bristol have always regarded with peculiar jealousy, on account of the indefinite amount, in which, if once established, its produce might be applied to purposes which the funds belonging to the city have hitherto proved sufficient to fulfil—a tax which it would be superfluous to remind you, has been attempted when the trade of the place was incomparably more capable of supporting it than under its present condition—and was then abandoned.

"The Board most respectfully but most urgently intreat you, as you value the present tranquillity and the future welfare of the city, once more to abandon (at least until its necessity is established by a full and unreserved publication of the Civic accounts) the attempt to impose a tax which, even if it could be temporarily endured, would, probably, by its consequences, preclude all hope of the successful competition of this port with its rising and less heavily burthened rivals; and to adopt instead, a system of the most rigid and unsparing economy in the administration of the Civic resources. By which means, and by which alone, as the Board believe, not only may the city be relieved of its present tremendous liabilities, but by continuing in the same course, a considerable part of those burthens may eventually be removed, which have paralysed and threaten almost to destroy its commercial and manufacturing industry.

"*Dated March 5th*, 1832."

(Signed) RICHARD POOLE KING, Vice-President,
Chairman.

To this Memorial the following reply was received:—

"At a Meeting of the COMMON COUNCIL, held at the Guildhall, in the City of Bristol, on Wednesday, the 14th day of March, 1832,

"A Memorial from the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce, addressed to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, having been read and taken into consideration,

It was resolved unanimously, "That this Corporation deeply participates with the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, in the feeling which that Body has expressed of the depressed state of the trade and commerce of this city, and this Corporation laments that the large sacrifice made out of its limited income in the reduction of the Town and Mayor's Dues, although attended with considerable inconvenience in reference to the expenditure of the Corporation, has not, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, produced an adequate advantage to the public.

"The observations made by the Directors as to the deplorable outrages committed in Bristol during the late riots, and of the extensive failures which have lately occurred of houses engaged in the most important branches of its commerce, although founded in strict truth, have arisen from causes altogether out of the controul of this

Corporation, and much as those causes are to be lamented, the Corporation can only express its regret in common with the citizens at large that those unhappy circumstances should have occurred.

"This Corporation would most readily concur in any measure which might tend to the alleviation of general or individual distress, so far as may be consistent with the extensive engagements to which its funds are liable; but the appropriation of those funds must be left altogether to the discretion of the Corporation, which is alone answerable for the due administration of them, and must not be subject to the controul of persons exempt from that liability.

"Nevertheless, in order to afford satisfaction to the minds of the citizens as to the amount of the Corporate funds, the whole of the receipts, payments, and accounts of the Corporation, have been lately submitted to the consideration of several gentlemen of the highest respectability, forming a deputation of a considerable number of the Merchants, Bankers, and Traders of this city, and this Corporation has fully authorized that deputation to make public in such a manner as they may deem proper, the result of any investigation, either general or particular, which they have already made, or may think it proper to make on the subject.

"With reference to the observations of the Board of Directors as to the levying a County Rate, it is only necessary for this Corporation to remark, that it has no control whatever over such rate, the law having invested the authority to make it in the Justices in Sessions assembled.

"*Ordered*,—That a Copy of these Resolutions be transmitted to the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce."

Whereupon the Committee appointed by the Board, transmitted an answer, as follows:—

At a Meeting of the Committee appointed by the Board of Directors, March 16, 1832, Wm. Tothill, Esq. in the Chair.

The reply of the Corporation of the 14th instant having been read,

It was resolved,—"That this Committee is gratified to learn, that the Corporation will most readily concur in any measure which might tend to the alleviation of general or individual distress, so far as is in their power.

"With reference to the observation contained in the reply, 'that the reduction of the Town and Mayor's Dues has not, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, produced an adequate advantage to the public,' the Committee would remark, that the Memorial expressly states 'that a signal augmentation has taken place in that branch of commerce in which the greatest remission was effected; and that other branches, in which little or no alteration was made, instead of increasing with the increasing trade of the country, have either remained stationary or have declined.' The Corporation, therefore, appear to have misunderstood the Memorial in this respect.

Ordered,—"That a copy of the foregoing be transmitted to the Corporation, by the Chairman."

(Signed) WM. TOTHILL, Chairman.

No further steps appear to have been taken in imposing a County Rate.

On the obstructions to the navigation of the Floating Harbour, by the accumulation of silt in several parts, the Board have continued their requisitions to the Dock Company, who have replied that a committee has been specially appointed, to ascertain and report upon the improvements capable of being effected in their works, for obviating the imperfections from which the complaints arise. Mr. Milne and Mr. Brunell have each surveyed the harbour, for the purpose of advising the Dock Company on the means of remedy: with the former of these gentlemen a deputation from the Chamber had an interview, at which they were enabled to represent fully the present evils, as regards the obstructions to the navigation and the frequent draining of *both* branches of the harbour. As yet no specific plan has been approved by the Dock Company, nevertheless the prospect of some effectual remedy is advanced. The Board have also memorialized the Dock Company, urging a review of their rates, and a reduction on those articles the trade in which is prejudiced by continuing the present scale, and the Chamber will be gratified to learn, that the Dock Company have instituted enquiries as the foundation of an investigation into this subject, with a desire to make those alterations which, consistently with duly maintaining the rights and revenue of the proprietary, the interests of the port may require.

The proposition for establishing at this port a mail packet station, by steam vessels, to the South of Ireland, has been diligently pursued. The House of Commons having appointed a committee to enquire into the communications between England and Ireland, a favourable opportunity was

presented of again urging the advantages this port was calculated to afford : the Society of Merchant Venturers and also the Corporation lent their assistance, the former body having authorized the attendance of their professional adviser, Mr. Osborne, with several other gentlemen, before the committee as witnesses, and the Corporation having directed the attendance of Mr. Brunelle; the Board prevailed upon one of its members to give his personal attendance upon and explanation to the committee in furtherance of the object. The committee appeared to have entered upon the subject very fully, to have examined numerous witnesses, and to have collected a mass of information, which, with an elaborate report, forms a volume of the sessional papers. Without arriving at any conclusive opinion, the committee evidently do not favour the proposition for removing the present establishment to Bristol. The report is of too great a length to admit of introduction here, or even an extract, but on reference it will be found to contain much interesting matter.

On the bills in Parliament, during the last session, the attention of the Board has been more than usually engaged. The bill for amending the laws regulating the issue and granting permits for removal of exciseable commodities was found to contain very objectionable provisions; information was immediately given to all members of the Chamber likely to be affected, who, after meeting and deliberating on the bill, appointed a deputation to London. After several interviews with the Government authorities, the deputation procured, with the assistance of Mr. Baillie, (Mr. Protheroe being absent from ill health) such amendments as not only removed the objections, but remedied some of the inconveniences which previously were

experienced. Those sections of the Act for amending the laws of the Customs which apply to the shipment, as stores, of warehoused goods, gave rise to several communications with his Majesty's government, wherein the Board do not hesitate to say, they consider the Shipping interests have been unduly compromised, and been made subservient to some dominant influence. The Act authorizes the shipment, without entry or payment of duty, of warehoused goods as stores, with power to the Commissioners of Cus oms to limit the *quantities*, the avowed object of the Act being to sanction the consumption of foreign provisions as ship's stores; yet, notwithstanding, it has been contrived that the benefit so afforded should be suspended. The subject being one deserving serious notice, the Board forwarded the following Memorial to the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury, and also transmitted copies to the principal out-ports :—

"To the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury.

"The Memorial of the Board of Directors of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce.

"Sheweth,—That your Memorialists hailed with much satisfaction the introduction of a clause into a recent Act of Parliament, (2 and 3 W.IV. chap. 84, s. 48,) calculated to afford considerable relief to the Shipping interest,—an interest closely interwoven with others, and one which, though of the most vital importance to the welfare of the country, has long been lamentably depressed, and exposed to a direct competition with that of comparatively untaxed countries.

"That your Memorialists have learned, with surprise and regret, that the Board of Customs has given such directions as, according to the construction put on them by the Officers of Customs here, to render almost nugatory the beneficent intention of the Legislature; inasmuch as the operation of the Act is thereby confined to a few enumerated articles of minor importance, to the exclusion of bread, flour, salt provisions, and other principal stores.

"Your Memorialists respectfully submit, that the intention of the Legislature is too clearly expressed to admit of a doubt, and that

the Board of Customs is not competent in making regulations virtually to nullify the Act, and to deprive the community of advantages the Legislature has thought fit to confer.

"Your Memorialists therefore pray, that your Lordships will be pleased to issuesuch directions to the Board of Customs, as shall afford to your Memorialists their just privileges conferred by the Act referred to, and as shall give to the Act its proper and due construction, thereby enabling the commercial community to ship, without entry or payment of duty, all such warehoused goods as may be required for stores.

Bristol, Sept. 4th, 1832.

(Signed) W. S. JACQUES, President.

To which the following reply was received:

"GENTLEMEN,—Having laid before the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, your Memorial, requesting permission to ship, without entry or payment of duty, all such warehoused goods as may be reqnired for stores:

"I am commanded by their Lordships to inform you that, under the provisions of the Statute 2 and 3 W. IV, c. 84, to which you refer, the fullest power is reserved to the Board of Customs, to accompany or to restrict the permission to be granted by such regulations, as may seem expedient, and that the Board of Customs have exercised this power in the manner which appeared most conducive to the interest of the public. I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

"*Treasury Chambers*, J. STEWART.
26*th Sept.* 1832.

Addressed to "The Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, Bristol."

It is only necessary to observe on this reply, that the Act gives the Board of Customs power to issue regulations and directions for the shipment,*

*2 and 3 W. IV., c, 84, s. 48.

And whereas it is expedient to permit warehoused goods to be delivered into the charge of the Searchers, to be shipped as stores for certain ships upon certain voyages, without entry or payment of duty, Be it enacted that, from and after the passing of this Act, such goods shall and may be delibered into the charge of the Searchers, to be shipped as stores, without entry or payment of any duty for any ship of the burthen of seventy tons at least, bound upon a voyage to foreign parts, the probable duration of which, out and home, will not be less than forty days: provided always, that such goods shall be shipped in such quantities, and subject to such directions and regulations as the Commissioners of Customs shall direct and appoint."

but does not recognize any authority in them to *prohibit* such shipment, especially where the articles are clearly those to which the permission was by the Act intended chiefly to apply. It is an indirect mode of refusing obedience to a legislative enactment.

In the bill for encouraging and facilitating the Employment of Labourers in Agriculture, power was given to enclose, under certain circumstances, open commons belonging to any parish. This provision would have authorized enclosures on Clifton and Durdham Downs; the Board, therefore, through the interference of the members in Parliament, procured the introduction of a clause, controuling the operation of the power in cases of commons adjacent to populous cities or towns.

To the Bristol Compensation Bill, and that for establishing a Police, immediate attention was applied, and several communications were made to the Corporation on the contents of each of them. The management of the former bill having devolved upon the gentlemen deputed from the several parishes, superseded the necessity of any further special proceedings thereon by this Board; and the latter, (the Police bill) having been withdrawn, relieved the Board from further duty on that subject. The bill for altering the Usury Laws was brought under special consideration; which several matters, together with other subjects of a general nature, formed part of the duties arising out of the examination and consideration of the parliamentary papers and proceedings during the session.

In the progress of enquiry into the improvements of the Courts of Law and their practice the Parliamentary Commissioners transmitted, by circulars to different mercantile establishments, a list of

queries, several of which having been received by members of the Chamber, were referred to the Board as a convenient means of procuring a due consideration of the points raised. The result of their enquiries and opinion was embodied in an answer transmitted to the Commissioners, giving a description of the several local courts of the city, their efficiency and defects, and entering into the question of the establishment of county courts and the advantages and disadvantages likely to result to the trading interests therefrom. The documents would occupy too much space to admit of their introduction in this report.

The establishment of the direct mail to Liverpool, via Monmouth, Hereford, and Shrewsbury, which the Chamber exerted itself to procure, and which was started as an experiment, has been continued, to the decided advantage of the public, particularly to all connected with the line of country through which it passes. Facilities of communication invariably produce new connections in trade, and this result should prompt an active encouragement to all reasonable schemes for improvements throughout the kingdom. The expenditure on the piers at Aust Passage, though little regarded by the citizens at the time the work was in progress, has, with the introduction there of the steam vessel, been one principal means of establishing the additional communication with the districts north of the Severn—the uncertainty and inconvenience of crossing the estuary of the Severn being now comparatively removed. The same motive as calculated to improve our communication with the south of Ireland, induces the Board to look with anxiety to the perfecting a pier at Portishead for the use of the steam vessels, and to the completion of the bridge across the Avon at Clifton.

The Bristol & Gloucestershire Railway is advancing far towards completion, and it is not improbable, it may be ultimately extended to the city of Gloucester, to which place a line from Birmingham is in contemplation.

The scheme of a Railway from Bristol to London having excited the public attention, a requisition from the Board was forwarded to the several public bodies, inviting a co-operation for investigating the eligibility and practicability of such an undertaking. The Corporation, the Society of Merchant Venturers, the Dock Company, the Bristol and Gloucestershire Railway Company, and this Board, having each deputed a certain number of gentlemen to meet for the purpose, who will forthwith enter upon the intended investigation.

The statements of Imports and Exports, the number of Foreign and British vessels that have entered the port, and their tonnages, and the particular of the Irish trade, are continued in the regular series from the Report of January, 1831. Those for the year ending Dec. 1831, are partially imperfect, the papers for October having been lost in the destruction of the Custom-house;—they will, however, serve for comparison. This exposition shews, on comparing the last with the former years, a serious diminution of trade, and though attributable to general as well as local causes, its extent demands the strenuous exertions of all classes of the community to regain, by cordial union and judicious measures, the degree of progressive improvement which, until recently, had been acquired.

Statement of Sundry Foreign *Goods* imported *into the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, *and* 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831*	1832
Sugars, West India .....hhds.	26057	31644	31418	27743	29303	24491
——— .....tierces	1760	2308	2762	2243	2383	2047
——— .....brls.	1438	1398	1885	969	1205	2261
——— East India & Mauritius .....bags	....	....	4297	10496	23199	23337
Coffee and Cocoa .....casks	376	470	449	394	50	234
——— .....bags	1085	981	412	186	265	412
Pepper .....bags	....	....	139	158	....	3
Spirits .....pipes	4002	3425	3185	4186	3965	2547
——— .....hhds.	1194	980	1180	1378	1005	1540
Tobacco.....hhds.	1262	1163	773	1186	960	697
Wine.....pipes	1181	2207	1619	1383	1083	992
——— .....hhds.	1155	1852	1040	1386	1125	1005
——— .....cases	488	571	525	719	341	153
——— .....casks	229	936	259	1038	561	596
Timber, American .....pieces	18371	13638	19593	11826	19809	7544
——— European.....pieces	3078	2894	3741	2598	2560	1325
Deals, Ameriacan ..long hunds.	358	415	522	201	744	362
——— European ....long hunds.	637	705	548	545	473	767
Wool .....bags	5809	1062	2108	2157	2328	1805
Cotton, United States ....bales	....	203	....	....	118	....
——— British .....bales	492	898	286	109	28	83
Corn .....qrs.	....	....	61397	74297	147076	6304

Statement of value *of sundry* British *Goods* exported *to* Foreign *Parts from the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, *and* 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	83 1†	1832
Woollen Goods .....value	£26571	26249	22584	18736	17299	18441
Cotton Goods.....	13003	14573	20154	14702	8085	11348
Linens.....	11610	13471	10032	12583	8066	8672
Hardware	373	406	740	347	260	605
Earthenware	5667	3489	3629	2330	1810	2109
Coal .....chaldrons	4256	5634	4525	4367	4034	3796
Salt .....bushels	128564	97404	75233	73875	34253	29974
Total Exports paying Export Duty Value.....	422100	414288	399805	429352	353860	317532

*The month of October omitted, the records having been destroyed.

†Complete, the records having been saved.

Statement of British *Vessels entered* inwards *from Foreign Parts to the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831*	1832
Number of Vessels ..	417	374	371	364	403	248
Tonnage of the same ..	76397	67331	72384	68241	75619	48028

Statement of Foreign *Vessels entered* inwards *from Foreign Parts to the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831*	1832
Number of Vessels ..	72	60	63	48	96	28
Tonnage of the same ..	8333	8378	7891	7056	12653	4102

Statement of British *Vessels entered* outwards *for Foreign Parts from the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831*	1832
Number of Vessels ..	245	247	242	256	203	197
Tonnage of the same ..	51167	50283	49836	50797	44341	42087

Statement of Foreign *Vessels entered* outwards *for Foreign Parts from the Port of Bristol, in the years* 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831*	1832
Number of Vessels ..	24	21	23	19	21	18
Tonnage of the same ..	3589	3496	3298	3610	3339	3407

Statement of the number of Vessels belonging to the Port of Bristol, for the years 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832.

	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832
Vessels belonging to Bristol	283	300	319	323	339	303
Of which employed at other Ports or laid up	22	31	30	32	33	32

*The month of October omitted, the records having been destroyed.

Statement of the number of Vessels cleared outwards for Ireland, *the total value of British Goods, and the quantities of refined Sugar, raw Sugar, and Tea, shipped from Bristol to* Ireland, *for the year* 1824, *being the year before the Town Dues were taken off*, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, *and* 1832,—1826 *having likewise been the year of the introduction of Steam conveyance for goods.*

	1824	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832
No. of Vessels	113	198	278	314	342	364	Records Lost	400
Value of Brit. Goods	126,999	195,909	294,200	341,875	294,573	304,659		297,884
Ref. Sugar, cwt	3,596	7,796	20,188	27,719	27,233	37,793		37,717
Raw Sugar cwt	190	10,426	4,043	17,157	9,421	9,830		4,397
Tea ....lbs.	6	22,368	49,627	50,349	53,976	51,687		61,230

Statement of the number of Vessels entered into the Port of Bristol from Ireland, and the quantities of sundry Goods imported from Ireland, for the year 1824, *being the year before the Town Dues were taken off*, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, *and* 1832,—1826, *having likewise been the year of the introduction of Steam conveyance for goods.*

	1824	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832
Vessels, No.	457	505	731	801	930	726	....	537
tons	38,709	39,295	83,193	100,640	102,394	91,099	....	87,318
Oats,....qrs.	28,895	63,038	74,505	124,710	63,183	49,064	38,167	51,630
Barley,..qrs.	5,789	8,569	2,841	2,265	13,767	25,022	13,232	16,980
Wheat,..qrs.	22,752	15,836	18,669	36,381	45,456	51,179	35,607	28,905
Flour, ..cwt.	20,227	4,183	6,467	23,719	42,235	57,085	81,024	45,309
Cattle, ..head	1,496	550	2,818	4,535	10,498	6,265	6,078	4,077
Sheep, ...	526	1,625	4,765	5,716	9,555	19,700	11,640	4,446
Pigs, ...	24,936	26,047	89,580	37,250	62,163	85,208	84,107	85,619
Horses.....	26	25	56	21	267	284	159	190
Potatoes, tons	2	575	80	130	2,878	1,815	294	408
Butter,..cwt.	15,244	14,900	37,164	43,500	32,607	32,000	19,386	35,395
Bacon,..cwt.	13,778	4,745	....	....	....	....	....	....
bales	....	1,138	7,015	5,384	5,434	6,107	7,158	4,057
Lard, ..cwt.	452	530	1,400	2,030	720	1,614	{ 206 hhds.	{ 143 hhds.
Salmon, cwt.	29	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
brls.	....	28	19	....	....	....	....	....
boxes	....	342	2,839	414	724	2,644	927	3,294
kits	....	933	....	....	....	40	3,425	....

The foregoing details of proceedings will convince the Chamber that the duties of the Board are not of a trifling nature, unattended with sacrifice of time, nor capable of being executed without pecuniary resources. The subjoined account of receipts and expenditure shews a material reduction in the reserved balance, and this arising not from extra expenditure, but from a reduction in the number of members. An establishment like the Chamber cannot be maintained without the public support, and in proportion as this is withdrawn, so are the means of beneficially applying the capabilities of the Institution necessarily abridged.

To Mr. Baillie and Mr. Protheroe the Chamber is indebted for very efficient services on Parliamentary business through the last Session.

W. S. JACQUES, President.

Bristol, Jan. 25, 1833.

Dr. **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.** *Cr.*

1832	RECEIPTS.	£.	s.	d.
January.	To Balance in Treasurer's hands as per last Account	70	13	5
Dec. 31.	To five Arrears of Annual Subscription for 1831	5	5	0
	To amount received from 146 Members for the year ending 31st December, 1832.....	153	6	0
		£229	4	5
	To Balance brought down.....	£17	15	0

1833.	PAYMENTS.	£.	s.	d.
January.	By Mr. J. R. Hall, for Parliamentary Votes and Proceedings.....	18	3	0
	By Messrs. Browne and Reid, for Stationary	1	5	9
	By Messrs. Turpin and Co. for Binding Books	0	13	6
	By Payments for Schedules and Returns of Imports and Exports for 1831 and 1832.....	5	5	0
	By Expences of Witness to London, to be examined before the Committee of Enquiry into the Post communication with Ireland	7	12	0
	By Printers, viz.—			
	Messrs. Gutch and Martin £4 4 7			
	Mr. Taylor, (Mirror) 2 9 0			
	Mr. Somerton 12 17 3			
	Mr. Mills 2 4 2			
	Bristol Liberal 1 3 6			
		22	18	6
	By Fee to Counsel, for Opinion on City liabilities, and Postages	4	13	8
	By Petty Disbursements as per Account	2	18	0
	By Rent of Committee-Rooms to 21st December, 1832, including Fire and Laundress.....	32	10	0
	By Secretary, for the year ending 21st Dec., 1832..	105	0	0
	By Collector of Subscriptions	10	10	0
	By Balance carried down	17	15	0
		£229	4	5

Audited and Examined,

January 26, 1833.

JAMES EZEKIEL NASH.
EDWARD SLADE.
ROBERT FLETCHER.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

COMMERCIAL ROOMS, JAN. 28, 1833.

AT the Annual Meeting of the Chamber, held this day;

W. S. JAQUES., ESQ., PRESIDENT,
IN THE CHAIR;

A Report from the Board of Directors, detailing their proceedings in the past year, having been presented,

It was Resolved unanimously,

That the Report now read be approved; and that it be printed and distributed under the direction of the Chairman.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Directors, for the zeal and attention shewn by them in the several subjects referred to in the Report.

That this Meeting is gratified in the opportunity of acknowledging the valuable services rendered to the City by the Commissioners acting under the Compensation Act, in the diligence and judgment with which the arduous duties undertaken by them have been discharged, and to which may be attributed the success that has hitherto attended their endeavours.

That the Thanks of this Meeting be conveyed to James Evan Baillie and Edward Protheroe, Jun., Esquires, for their attention to the frequent communications from the Chamber in the past year.

That the attention of the Board of Directors of this Chamber be again called to the subject of the accumulation of mud in our Floating Harbour;

and that they be requested to point out to their Fellow-citizens the best method of obtaining redress, and putting an end to the delay which has for so many years characterized the proceedings of the Dock Company on this subject.

That a Committee be appointed to take measures for increasing the number of Members to this Institution; and that such Committee be composed of the following gentlemen:—Messrs. Thos. Sanders, George Eaton, Edward Harley, W. E. Acraman, John Dowell, W. Harwood, and Edward Thomas, with power to add to their number.

W. S. JAQUES,
Chairman.

The Chairman having left the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to him for his able conduct therein.—The like Thanks were also voted to the Committee of the Commercial-Rooms, for the use of their Sale-room on this and former occasions.—Whereupon the Meeting adjourned to Monday next, the 4th February, at the Commercial-Rooms, at Twelve o'clock, to receive the Report of the Scrutineers of the Ballot for new Directors, to elect a President, two Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, and Auditors for the ensuing year.

LIONEL OLIVER BIGG,
Secretary.

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